

Hafa Adai!

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POLL RESULTS

Which do you prefer:
Precinct-level representatives or island-wide representatives?

Precinct-level reps-30

Precinct-level reps-80

No opinion-10

Sunday, March 04, 2012

INSIDE

BUSINESS



BP's multibillion-dollar settlement with people and businesses harmed by its 2010 oil spill removes some uncertainty about the potential financial damages it faces.

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ASIA



China said Sunday that it would boost its defense spending by 11.2 percent in 2012, the latest in a nearly two-decade string of double-digit increases.

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LIFE & STYLE



Oprah Winfrey has landed an interview with Whitney Houston's daughter and other family members for a TV special that will air on the Oprah Winfrey Network.

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MBA's Hwang tops CNMI PSS STEM Fair. **PAGE 2**
Still no arrest a month after bartender's killing. **PAGE 3**

Over 100 Marines training on Tinian as early as May

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Roughly 175 U.S. Marines could start training on Tinian as early as May 8 if the ongoing development of a scope of work goes as planned, officials told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

And if all goes well, Exercise Geiger Fury MAG-012 could be the first major U.S. military training exercise on Tinian in a decade. It would also involve restoration of Tinian's historic North Field.

Two-thirds of Tinian land is leased by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Officials from Marine Aircraft Group-12 Japan visited the CNMI on Thursday to brief officials about the planned training exercise.

Tinian Mayor Ray Dela Cruz said yesterday it's "about time" DoD makes use of its leased land on Tinian.



Dela Cruz

"Since taking office, I have been lobbying with the military leadership in Guam to make use of the DoD leased lands on Tinian. It is most appropriate that the United States Marine Corps would be the first to take advantage of the opportunity," said Dela Cruz, who was "pleasantly surprised" by the Marine Corps and Navy officials' visit on Tinian Thursday.

Dela Cruz said he hopes the military plan is approved.

"We welcome the Marines and I am

See MARINES on Page 4

Ermitanio is Scripps Regional Spelling Bee champion

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Marcy Ann Ermitanio, an eighth grader from Chacha Oceanview Junior High School, was hailed champion of the 40th Annual Scripps Regional Spelling Bee held at the Sheraton Laguna Guam Resort last Saturday.

The 13-year-old bested 73 other top spellers from both public and private schools in Guam, the CNMI, Palau, and Pohnpei during the tense rounds in last



Ermitanio

See SPELLING on Page 4

Mt. Carmel School is 2012 Mock Trial champion



By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Mount Carmel School emerged as this year's champion of the CNMI High School Mock Trial Competition held last Friday at the Guma Hustisia.

The seven-member group bested defending champion Marianas Baptist Academy in an intense final round that lasted past 7pm Friday.

Victor Manuel Cabrera, Lourence Jason Camacho, Anne Gelika Elenzano, Andrea Grace Manese, Ji Min Ryu, An-

astasia Rose Schweiger, and Dominic Travilla will be the Commonwealth's representatives to the national high school mock trial tilt to be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico from May 3 to 6.

This year's championship was the fourth for MCS, which also won the same recognition and advanced to the national contest in 2010, 2008, and in 1999.

The team's coaches include Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Lourdes Mendiola, and Atty. Joseph Deleon Guerrero Tajeron Jr.

In November last year, the MCS mock



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Mount Carmel School mock trial team members pose with their coaches after the awarding rites Friday night at Saipan Grand Hotel. The group emerged champion in this year's mock trial competition and will advance to compete in the national event in New Mexico this May. It was the fourth time MCS bagged the prestigious title.

trial team was also hailed champion of the 3rd Annual Asia-Pacific Invitational Mock Trial Competition in Agana, Guam where they bested seven other teams from Guam and South Korea.

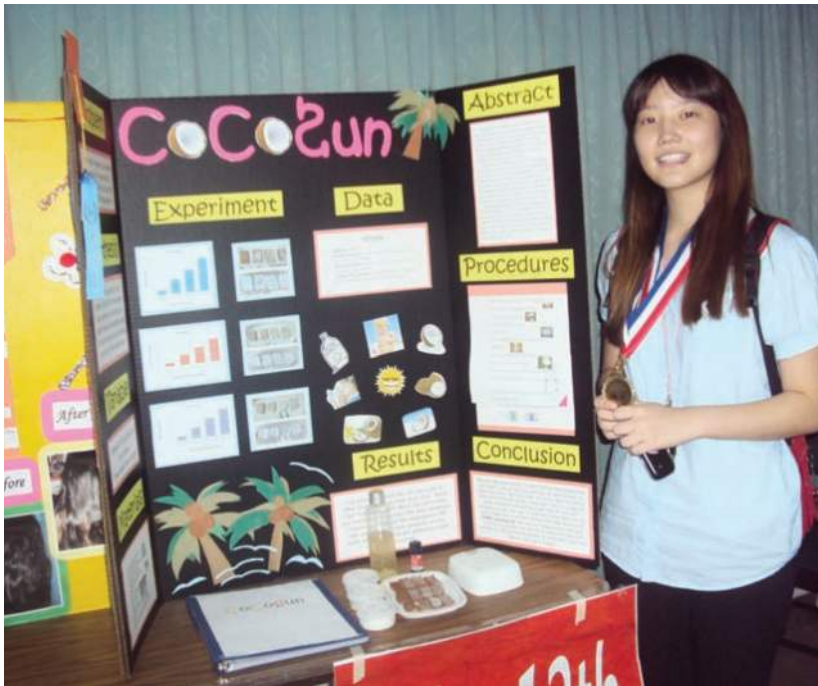
Members of the MCS mock trial team said Friday that the honor although unexpected was very fulfilling.

"Before it was announced, we coaches were talking to the members telling them that win or lose, we're just so proud of the team for working so hard and performing so well. We went over the years to never expect anything [on the competition]. We just hope for the best and al-

See MOCK TRIAL on Page 4

Local

MONETH G. DEPOSA
Marianas Baptist Academy 11th grader Jee Hui Hwang stands beside her winning entry "Cocosun" after Saturday's awarding ceremonies of the 2012 PSS Islandwide STEM Fair at Saipan Southern High School. Hwang will be the official CNMI delegate to the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, the world's largest international pre-college science competition which will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania from May 13 to 18.



MONETH G. DEPOSA

The five overall winners in the 2012 PSS Islandwide STEM Fair pose with PSS associate commissioner Glenn Muna and the event's coordinators during awarding rites last Saturday at Saipan Southern High School. Four of the winners—from kindergarten to eighth grade—will compete in the Guam science fair while one will advance to the national science competition in May.

MBA's Hwang tops PSS' STEM Fair

- » 11th grade entry 'cocosun' to advance to national event
- » Four other winners to compete in Guam science fair

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

An 11th grader from Marianas Baptist Academy emerged the overall champion of the 2012 Public School System Islandwide STEM Fair last Saturday after her entry "Cocosun" bagged the top prize in the health and nutrition category.

Jee Hui Hwang's project will now represent the CNMI in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, the world's largest international pre-college science competition which will be held in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania from May 13 to 18.

She will compete against more than 1,500 high school students across countries, regions, and territories who will showcase their own independent researches.

Hwang's project topped her school's science fair which entitled her to compete in the state level alongside private and public schools in the Commonwealth.

Surprised by the recognition, Hwang vowed to do her best to represent the CNMI in the national competition. She said it took her a month to finalize her "Cocosun" entry, which is about making the island's coconut oil as a natural organic sunscreen that will protect people's skin from sunrays and sunburns.

From the statement of her problem, to gathering hypothesis and experiments, Hwang's project received the approval of judges that include acting governor Eloy Inos, House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) and Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), among others.

Four other students from kindergarten to 8th grade were hailed overall winners in Saturday's competition and earned slots to compete in the Guam science fair next month.

They included Thomas Man-

glona from Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr. & Sr. High School who emerged first place in the sixth to eighth grade division. His project titled "Marianas Crow Self-Recognition Mirror Test," was the first conducted on the island and was inspired by the student's biologists-friends from the Rota's Aviary Ecology Program.

The award, he told *Saipan Tribune*, was also unexpected. This year marked the second time Manglona won the overall award in the island STEM Fair, the first was when he was in fourth grade.

In the fourth to fifth grade division, hailed overall winner and will now advance in the Guam science competition was Koblerville Elementary's Angel Legaspi while Kaitlyn Ishizaki of Dandan Elementary ruled the second to third grade division. For kindergarten to first grade, Kagman Elementary's Devin Kapileo won the title.

144 total entries

According to Jeaniffer Cubangbang, one of the event's coordinators, PSS received 144 total entries which is an increase by 40 from last school year. These projects competed in seven categories: life science, physical science, earth and space science, health and nutrition and medical, behavioral and social science, technology and electronics, and mathematics.

Each year, she disclosed entries from students are getting better which is a testament of their increasing interest and love for science and math.

She said STEM Fair allows students to enhance learning and communication skills through engaging in hands-on activities, experimentation, research, and presentation.

PSS associate commissioner for administrative services Glenn Muna, along with STEM

See HWANG on Next Page

MARIANAS WINDS

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American Memorial Park Baseball field

Still no arrest a month after bartender's killing

» Parents, relatives discourage Romero's 2 siblings from coming back to Saipan

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Today marks a month after slain bartender Emerita "Emie" Romero was last seen alive boarding a car in Garapan, but no one has been arrested yet.

As this developed, *Saipan Tribune* learned that the parents and relatives of Romero in the Philippines have been trying to stop her two siblings, particular-

ly Estrellita Relata, from coming back to Saipan due to what happened.

A relative disclosed that siblings Eduardo and Estrellita Relata are trying to convince their parents and relatives to allow them to come back to Saipan where they have been working for many years.

The Relatas accompanied Romero's body aboard Delta Air Lines flight via Japan last Feb.

18. Romero's husband, two daughters, and five other siblings are based in the Philippines.

It is not clear yet when the Relatas are returning to Saipan. Romero's family, through Estrellita Relata, had asked *Saipan Tribune* over the weekend about any update in the investigation.



Romero

The Department of Public Safety last week did not release to the media any update in their investigation.

The last update was on Feb. 24, 2012 when Public Safety Commissioner Ramon C. Mafnas disclosed that authorities have identified a "person of interest" into the killing of Romero.

Mafnas said that DPS and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are currently investigating the activities and events associated with this "person of interest."

Romero was last seen alive boarding a green or blue tinted sedan around 3am on Feb. 5 near her residence in Garapan. FBI agents found her body two days later during a search in the northernmost building of the former La Fiesta Mall in San

Roque.

The cash reward, including the Crime Stoppers' \$1,000, has now reached \$22,000 for any information leading to an arrest in this case.

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HWANG

From Page 2

Fair coordinators, also conferred Saturday medals to individual winners in each grade

level and from each categories.

Also recognized during the ceremony was the Marianas High School aeronautical team, which won the state and regional Real World Design Challenge and will advance to the national

competition in Washington, D.C. Also recognized were second place Kagman High School and third place state winner Saipan Southern High School. This is the first time the CNMI will be competing in the

national real world design competition.

Saturday's even was graced by hundreds of parents and community members who showed their support to their children.

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UNLIKE MOST AGENCIES ASKING FOR MORE FUNDING

OPA offers budget that's 3% less than previous year

Unlike most agencies asking for more funding, the Office of the Public Auditor is proposing a fiscal year 2013 budget that's 3 percent less than its previous year's budget.

Public auditor Michael Pai said OPA is submitting a 2013 budget of \$2,100,400, which is 3 percent less than the 2012 budget of \$2,164,700.

"OPA believes that it has trimmed its spending to the maximum and any further cuts would hamper its operations," Pai said in a Feb. 29 letter to Virginia Villagomez, the governor's special assistant for management and budget.

Villagomez gave agencies until Feb. 29 to submit their budget requests with the Office of Management and Budget, to be able to prepare the governor's

budget submission to the Legislature on or before the April 1 deadline.

Pai said OPA has been fully aware of the CNMI's worsening financial condition due to the bad economy, so it has reviewed its spending plan and further cut expenses in areas that are not critical to fulfilling its mandates.

"During the past two fiscal years, OPA significantly reduced its budget by cutting personnel by almost 50 percent and by budgeting only necessary non-personnel costs," Pai said in his letter, copies of which were also provided to Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan), House minority leader Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), and Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson.

Of the \$2.1 million proposed budget, over \$1.4 million will be for personnel costs. The number of positions covered by this budget is 27.

Another \$487,300 will be for professional services, while \$19,800 will be for office expenses and \$12,800 will be for rentals, mainly vehicle rentals.

Travel budget is \$39,300, including for investigations, audits and ethics presentations on Rota and Tinian, as well as attendance at the Association of Pacific Island Public Auditors Annual Conference in Pago Pago, American Samoa.

Pai said OPA will apply for a training grant with the U.S. Department of the Interior for FY 2013. If approved, these travel costs to American Samoa

will be charged to the grant.

OPA's duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to conducting audits of public funds, handling all appeals of decisions made by the Procurement and Supply director in connection with any protest in the solicitation and award of a contract, enforcement of the Government Ethics Code Act, and enforcement of the campaign finance disclosure provisions of the Northern Mariana Islands Election Law.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, in a separate interview, said based on the agency budget submissions as of Feb. 29, it's still pretty much hard to determine the total amount requested by all agencies

but for sure, they have exceeded the projected ceiling of \$102 million for FY 2013 which is the same level as the 2012 budget.

"The budget call is basically for no more than the current level. It takes into account the austerity measures," he added.

Inos and budget analysts will be meeting with individual agency heads and directors in the next few days to discuss about the agencies' budget submissions and federal funds, barely a few weeks before the April 1 deadline for the Executive Branch to submit a budget to the Legislature. **(Haidee V. Eugenio)**

MARINES

From Page 1

hopeful that their initiative will convince Congress that building the Air Force Divert Base on Tinian is also in the best interest of the United States and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," he added.

Rep. Trenton Conner (R-Tinian) separately said yesterday the military is looking at 175 Marines to take part in the training exercise from May 8 to the middle of June.

Another official said "175" is just an "initial" figure and could change dramatically.

"It would give a boost to Tinian's economy but nothing significant," Conner said of the planned exercise.

'Enduring relationship'

Representatives of the Navy and the Marine Corps "revealed that they are working on a plan called Exercise Geiger Fury" during Thursday's meeting.

They, however, cautioned the mayor that this was only a collaborative meeting to gain input from all concerned parties as they develop the scope of work for the project, but were hopeful that operations might begin as early as May 8.

"Both Marine Corps and Navy officers advised the mayor that they will be working closely with the Commonwealth Ports Authority and all federal and local regulatory agencies to assure compliance with all federal and local laws. They said they wanted to create an 'enduring relationship' with Tinian and the CNMI that will be a win-win for all concerned," the mayor's office said.

Marines taking part in the exercise will start arriving on the annual San Jose fiesta weekend.

Dela Cruz's office also said if the exercise materializes as currently planned, the overall purpose of the project would be to create an Expeditionary Airfield at North Field for Marine Corps F/A 18 Hornets.

"The refurbished North Field runway could then be used twice a year for training operations. Tinian's West Field International Airport could be utilized in the meantime, if they receive concurrence from the proper agencies," Dela Cruz's office said.

The mayor was assured that the Marines would buy as much of their daily supplies as possible from local vendors, including coral, water, and Tinian's fresh fruits and vegetables. The Marines will also be given ample leave to visit Tinian's local establishments.

While on Tinian, the Marines could perform a variety of community service projects, including but not limited to unexploded ordnance surveying and removal, and cross training Marine Corps personnel with Tinian Department of Public Safety and Tinian Health Center employees. Some medical examinations and physicals could be provided to local residents.

Dela Cruz's office said the mayor was most pleased to learn that the engineers from Marine Wing Support Squadron 171—the Marine Corps Seabees—"might also be able to use some of their heavy equipment to help clear and improve access to historic sites within the North Field historic landmark boundaries."

"This will be a great benefit to Tinian's visitor industry, and a tremendous

savings to the CNMI general fund," the mayor's office added.

North Field restoration

Dela Cruz's office said according to the current plan, the North Field Restoration Project would be conducted in three phases.

In Phase 1, Marine Wing Support Squadron -171 would clear, grub, and strip Runway Bravo at North Field, then grade and compact new coral for C-130 and helicopter landing operations.

"If approval is received from all regulatory agencies, then the runway could receive a new coating of asphalt in order to support F-18 operations," the office said.

Heavy equipment necessary to do the job would arrive aboard C-130 cargo aircraft and high-speed vessels originating from Japan.

Marine Corps personnel at the point of origin in Japan would coordinate invasive species control with Tinian quarantine personnel.

The U.S. Department of Defense leased some two-thirds of Tinian to ensure there is a capable forward basing option location in the Pacific in the event of major hostilities in the Pacific or loss of access to existing forward basing facilities.

The lease deal, signed in 1983, is for 50 years with a renewal option for an additional 50 years.

During World War II, Tinian had the largest airbase in the world that accommodated nearly 1,000 B-29s. Tinian was where the United States launched the atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, hastening the end of the war.

SPELLING

From Page 1

Saturday's competition.

The Saipan student bagged \$750 cash prize and a trip to Washington, D.C. to represent the region in the national spelling competition on May 30.

Ermitanio battled Hopwood Junior High School's Masrur Alam in the final round and her victory was sealed when she correctly spelled "Ichabod" with confidence before hundreds of spectators in the crowd.

Her teacher-coach Gina Montelione told *Saipan Tribune* Saturday that Ermitanio appeared cool, under pressure, and very relaxed on stage throughout the competition.

She said the CNMI student spelled 16 words correctly in the contest, earning the slot to the national event this year as representative of the Pacific region.

Because of the dedication and commitment showed by her student prior to the competition, the coach said she's not surprised when Ermitanio bagged the championship.

"Her performance was truly inspiring and awesome. She is an amazing student who appeared very relaxed on stage, cool, under pressure. Marcy Ann is a bright and intelligent girl and I have seen her dedication. I am very proud of her," the coach told *Saipan Tribune* Saturday.

Besides practicing with her coach, it was learned that Ermitanio did a lot of self-study—searching through the Internet, studying vocabulary lessons, and proper pronunciations among others. The coach said the eighth grader has been preparing for the Guam competition since November.

In an interview with Ermitanio yesterday, she told *Saipan Tribune* that this year was her second time to participate in the Guam competition.

She admitted that although she was excited with the event, she confirmed that she wasn't feeling nervous at all.

According to Chacha Oceanview Jr. High School principal Vince Dela Cruz, Ermitanio is the first student from the school to bag the regional award and participate in the national spelling competition. The principal described Ermitanio's victory as one of the best news he received and was proud of her and her coach's achievement for the school and the entire CNMI Public School System.

"This is an awesome achievement for Chacha and PSS and this is evidence that lots of good thing are happening in the CNMI schools. I am confident that she will do her best to represent the CNMI in the national level," Dela Cruz told *Saipan Tribune* Saturday, affirming the school's support to the student.

Ermitanio is the fifth winner from Saipan since 2006. In 2010, William S. Reyes Elementary School's Mikhail Alcantara bagged the title in the same competition.

Top 10 Spellers

Based on the competition result, six CNMI students made it to the Top 10 Spellers during Saturday's competition.

Led by Ermitanio, also on the list were Masrur Alam of Hopwood Junior High School (second place); Mary Grace Tigla of Saipan Community School (4th placer); Albert Kenross Jacinto from Calvary Christian Academy (7th placer); Michelle Bermudes of William S. Reyes Elementary (8th placer); and Putra Sani of Oleai Elementary (9th placer).

Other winners in the Top 10 list are Lorenzo Jorolan of Adacao Academy (3rd placer); Nirupa Gadi of Harvest Christian Academy (5th placer); Kristian Cercado of F.B. Leon Guerrero Middle School (6th placer); and Alyssa Evette D. Sumbo of Oceanview Middle School (10th placer).

MOCK TRIAL

From Page 1

ways expect the worse," Deleon Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune*.

Since the school year opened in September, the MCS Mock Trial Knights—which is composed of 13 junior and high school students—have been preparing for the competition. Their participation in the Guam mock trial event was one of the coaches' ways to better practice and enhance the skills of members.

Asked what's their secret, Deleon Guerrero answered, "Team work, team work. We have our junior high and high school members and we treated everybody as one team. We trained and treated our junior members like we trained the high school team. So for us,

cultivating that long-term foundation is important."

He promised to give the group's best in the upcoming national contest, as they always did in the previous events.

This is the fifth year in a row that MBA and MCS faced each other in the competition's final round. "We always trained so hard for them and we thank MBA because they make us a better team," added Deleon Guerrero.

Andrea Grace Manese, who played the role of both prosecution and defense witness, said all their hard work paid off.

Although she is excited to be in the national tilt, she admits that the team has to work extra hard to best represent the CNMI in the highest level of the competition. Manese has been in the team since seventh grade.

Anastasia Rose Schweiger said she's

just so proud of the group and thankful to the guidance and sacrifices of their coaches whom she said had poured in a lot of time and effort to best train all the members. "We're not expecting to win but honestly, we prayed so hard and tried our best. It really feels good to win this again," she told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that she's looking forward to another good experience in the national event. Schweiger was also selected the competition's best defense attorney.

One of the team's defense and prosecution witness, Victor Cabrera, said the win was all worth it. He lauded the good performance of opposing teams which he said, made the event more exciting and challenging for the members. Like other members, this year marked Cabrera's fourth year in the mock trial competition and the first time to be in the national tilt.

Runner-up, individual awards

MBA was hailed as this year's runner-up and the recipient of the Supreme Court Professionalism Award. The group includes Kenny Sung Eun An, Jodel Fernandez, Se Young Hwang, Dong Hee Im, Young Eun Lee, Manatsu Omori, Eunice Park, and Han Sol Yu. Their coaches are teacher Paul Murphy and attorneys Jennifer Dockter and Adam Hardwicke.

Recipients of the individual awards are MCS' Anastasia Rose Schweiger as best defense attorney; Marianas High School's Deveney Dela Cruz as best prosecution attorney; Tinian Jr. & Sr. High School's Kyle Sanbergen and Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr. & Sr. High School's Austin Delos Santos as best defense witnesses; and MHS' Mike Johnson as best prosecution witness.

A first-timer to the contest, Austin

Delos Santos said he was surprised to bag the recognition and shared the victory with his team members for representing their best for their school.

"I want to share this award with my team members and our coaches because without their sacrifices, this is not possible for me. I am very nervous throughout the competition and I am also proud that I made it. This is my first time in the mock trial and I will cherish this experience in my life," said Delos Santos who will be graduating this school year.

Mock trial is a scholastic competition between both public and private schools throughout the CNMI. It started in 1999 by the CNMI Bar Association and former Justice Ramon Villagomez as a way to further the understanding and appreciation of the judicial system.

US Senate panel to hear Rota national park bill on March 7

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources' Subcommittee on National Parks has set a March 7 hearing on Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's (Ind-MP) bill authorizing the Interior secretary to study archaeological, historical, and natural resources on Rota for inclusion in the National Park System.

Sablan's H.R. 1141 or the Rota National Park bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives in January.

At the same time, the Rota Legislative Delegation chaired by

Sen. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota) adopted last week a resolution supporting Sablan's Rota National Park bill.

The delegation resolution's adoption came a few weeks after Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota) sent letters asking U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee chair Jeff Bingaman and Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski, along with 20 other U.S. senators, to support HR 1141.

Sablan said the March 7 hearing "is the next step forward to passage of the bill."



Sablan

"In addition to protecting the rare and unique archaeological and natural resources of Rota, a national park could give a boost to ecotourism, transportation, hotel, and restaurant businesses—and create jobs," Sablan said.

The hearing will be webcasted live on March 8 at 5:30am, Chamorro Standard Time, on the Committee's website and an archived video will be available shortly after.

Anyone interested in submitting a letter of support to be in-

cluded into the hearing record may send it by fax to 202-226-4249, or by email to Kilili@mail.house.gov, addressing the letter to Chairman Jeff Bingaman and Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, 304 Dirksen Senate Building, Washington, DC 20510.

A 2005 Department of the Interior field survey found that the Monchon Latte Stone Village, the Chugai Pictograph Cave, and other ancient sites on Rota have national significance and should be protected.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE!

Hertz®

Our Main Office is now located at the Comete Center Garapan adjacent to Tony Roma's as of March 1, 2012 and our contact details have remained the same.
Tel: 288-0042 • Fax: 288-7930
Email: hertz@triplejsaipan.com

AFTER BEING RECENTLY CLEARED OF ROBBERY CHARGES:

Man ordered to appear in federal court for revocation hearing

The federal court has ordered Nestor Camacho Taitano, a habitual offender who was recently cleared of charges in Superior Court in connection with the beating and robbing of a 65-year-old masseur, to appear for a revocation hearing pertaining to his probation.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona last week issued an order that set the revocation hearing on March 14, 2012 at 9am.

Manglona also granted the U.S. government's motion for the immediate release of Taitano from U.S. Marshal's custody.

Assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe, in the U.S. government's motion filed on Tuesday, stated that it appears to be that no judge will be available to bring Taitano before in the immediate future to address issues related to his release pending final revocation hearing.

Backe said the U.S. government, together with the U.S. Probation Office, also wishes for additional time to determine how and/or whether to proceed with the revocation proceedings in light of the recent jury verdict that acquitted Taitano.

Backe said that, on June 20, 2011, the U.S. Probation Office filed a petition for warrant or summons, alleging that Taitano had committed a new law violation and had consumed alcohol.

At a hearing on the matter on June 30, 2011, Taitano's attorney moved for continuance of the hearing, U.S. District Court for the NMI visiting judge A. Wallace Tashima granted the motion.

Backe said the minutes from the hearing reflect that Tashima "remanded Taitano back into the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

Backe said that, on July 8, 2011, the U.S. government

and Taitano's attorney filed a joint stipulation wherein they requested that the matter be continued until the defendant's prosecution in Superior Court had been completed.

Backe said the judge approved the stipulation and the hearing scheduled for July 13, 2011 was further vacated.

The prosecutor said sometime after the Superior Court's acquittal on Feb. 23, 2012, Taitano was released from CNMI custody despite the fact that a U.S. Marshal detainer was in place.

U.S. Marshals Office arrested Taitano on Tuesday.

Last Feb. 23, after deliberating for less than an hour, six Superior Court jurors reached a unanimous verdict finding Taitano not guilty of robbery, and conspiracy to commit robbery.

Superior Court associate

judge Joseph N. Camacho, who presided over the jury trial, handled the misdemeanor charges.

Camacho ruled that the prosecution failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that Taitano is guilty of assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Taitano has eight prior criminal convictions.

In November 2009, the federal court sentenced Taitano to time already served (159 days) for two counts of conspiracy to utter counterfeit obligations and securities, and two counts of uttering obligations and securities. He was placed on supervised probation for three years beginning Nov. 18, 2009.

In July 2010, the federal court revoked Taitano's supervised release and sentenced him to seven months in prison, after he admitted using "ice" and marijuana while on probation. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*



Manglona

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
BOARD OF PAROLE
P.O. BOX 502641, SAIPAN MP 96950-2641
TEL. NOS. (670) 664-3300 • FAX: (670) 664-3310
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Preliminary Hearing

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and LT. Governor Eloy Inos, through the CNMI Board of Parole, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992". Notice is hereby given that a Preliminary Hearing is scheduled for March 7, 2012, (Wednesday) at 10:00 A.M., at the CNMI Board of Parole Office, Capitol Hill Road, Building Number 1216, Saipan.

The following individual(s) will appear before the Hearing Examiner:

A. Parolee

1. DIAZ, David Tanaka Cr. Cs. No.: 01-0381E BOP No.: 10-005

If you have any question or information, please call the Parole Office at telephone numbers 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Rosa Ada Hocog
Hearing Examiner

Date: 02/21/2012

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³ The minimum deposit to open an account is \$5 with direct deposit (or \$100 without direct deposit). Accounts with a zero balance for 30 consecutive days will be closed automatically. You will receive a certificate in the mail, redeemable for an umbrella at any First Hawaiian Bank branch in Saipan, within 4-6 weeks after the first direct deposit to your account. This offer cannot be combined with any other promotional offer. Limit of one umbrella per customer or account. We reserve the right to substitute an item of similar value. Offer expires April 30, 2012, or when supplies are exhausted. First direct deposit must be credited by May 31, 2012. This offer is only available in Saipan.

Man acquitted of murder charges last year, admits using 'ice'

» Defendant also admits smoking marijuana 2 days after acquittal

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_deltorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Franklin Cabrera Cepeda Jr., a man who was acquitted last October for murder charges in connection with the 2000 killing of a businessman inside a karaoke bar, has admitted using methamphetamine or "ice" last January, according to the U.S. Probation Office.

U.S. Probation Officer Gregory F. Arriola said that, on Jan. 5, 2012 Cepeda reported to their

office to submit his monthly supervision report for the month of December 2011.

"This officer had him submit to a random drug test and he tested presumptive positive for methamphetamine," said Arriola in his report filed on Thursday in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

Arriola requested the district court to modify Cepeda's conditions or term of supervision. The defendant consented to such modification.

The probation officer said

at first, Cepeda denied he used "ice" and explained that he had taken ibuprofen three days ago because he was experiencing back pain.

Arriola informed the defendant that ibuprofen would not trigger a presumptive positive result for methamphetamine.

Shortly after Cepeda left the U.S. Probation Office, the defendant called Arriola and stated that a family member told him it was not ibuprofen pills but oxycodone pills that he consumed for back pain.

The probation officer informed the defendant that test results

would have been presumptive positive for opiates and not methamphetamine if he had indeed consumed oxycodone pills.

Arriola advised Cepeda that it is illegal to take another person's prescription medication and admonished him for the behavior.

Arriola said that, on the same day, Cepeda called him to admit that he used "ice" three days ago after an old friend had offered him the drug.

The probation officer said Cepeda then signed an admission form and was warned that continued noncompliant behavior may result in the revocation of his supervised release.

Arriola said Cepeda apologized for his actions and stated that he would work harder at avoiding situations that may cause him to revert back to drug use.

Arriola recommended that the mandatory condition be modified to the following: Cepeda shall refrain from any unlawful

use of a controlled substance and shall submit to one drug test within 15 days of release from jail and at least two periodic drug tests thereafter, not to exceed eight tests per month.

On Jan. 7, 2003, the district court sentenced Cepeda to 14 months in jail with three years of supervised release for his conviction to the offense of mail theft.

Due to his imprisonment over the murder case, Cepeda's term of supervised release did not begin until his release from the Department of Corrections on Oct. 7, 2011.

In November 2011, Arriola also reported to federal court that Cepeda smoked marijuana two days after a Superior Court jury rendered a not guilty verdict on him for murder charges.

The federal court granted the Probation Office's then recommendation that no action be taken against Cepeda.

In March 2005, Cepeda was sentenced to 66 years in jail af-

ter he was found guilty for the murder of Ron Zhou at a karaoke bar in San Jose. In 2009, the CNMI Supreme Court vacated the conviction and remanded the case to the Superior Court for a new trial.

On Oct. 7, 2011, the jurors reached a unanimous verdict finding Cepeda not guilty of first-degree murder, second-degree murder, aggravated assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, robbery, and conspiracy.

Associate judge Perry B. Inos, who presided over the retrial and decided the misdemeanor charges, found Cepeda guilty of assault and battery, and theft.

Inos sentenced the defendant to the maximum one year in prison and \$1,000 fine each as to assault and battery, and theft.

Since Cepeda had been in detention for eight years at the time, he was released from DOC that same day, Oct. 7.

Delay of Reksid's sentencing sought anew

The U.S. Probation Office has requested again to delay the sentencing of Franz B. Reksid, a former Department of Public Lands special assistant to the secretary who was found guilty in September 2011 to the charge that he accepted a \$3,000 bribe from an owner of a private company that obtained a federally funded contract from DPL.

U.S. Probation Officer Margarita D. Wonenberg on Thursday filed in federal court a second request to continue sentencing hearing and presentence investigation report in the case against 71-year-old Reksid.

Wonenberg requested the U.S. District Court for the NMI

to set the sentencing hearing scheduled for March 13, 2012 to April 24, 2012.

The probation officer also asked the court to allow their office to submit the presentence investigation report by tomorrow, March 6.

"The continuance will allow the probation officer to complete the presentence report investigation. The parties in the case have no objections to the proposed continuance," Wonenberg said.

Jan. 25, 2012 was the original sentencing date.

According to the U.S. government, Reksid, as then special assistant to DPL secretary, was responsible for overseeing

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grants to DPL.

The grants include the funding for removal and disposal of unexploded ordnance left behind from World War II in Marpi area on Saipan.

The indictment alleged that Reksid solicited a payment of \$3,000 from John Scott, owner of the All-Hazard Management Professionals Inc. (AMPRO) that obtained a contract with DPL.

EPA's grant funded the contract.

According to court documents, Reksid borrowed over \$300,000 from friends, associates, and relatives and wired part of the money to Ivory Coast and Nigeria. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

Women's Exhibit ongoing at Saipan Grand

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Following the success of their first ever Island Artist Exhibit, the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture is now hosting its annual Women's Exhibit at the Saipan Grand Hotel lobby in Susupe.

Visual and traditional coordinator Darrell Moteisou said the artwork of female artists from the Island Artist Exhibit are now part of the Women's Exhibit which aims to highlight female traditional and contemporary local artists.

At least 10 female artists are featured in the exhibit that's free to the public and will run until the end of the month.

"We expect to have more female artists display in the next few days their creations at this exhibit," Moteisou told *Saipan Tribune*.

Moteisou said that the Arts Council is thankful to the management and staff of the Saipan Grand Hotel for providing them the venue to hold their two exhibits.



CLARISSA V. DAVID

With island dancers dancing in the background, the artwork of female artists are displayed on Friday at the Annual Women's Exhibit at the Saipan Grand Hotel lobby. The exhibit is free to the public and will run until the end of the month.

"We are optimistic that the Women's Exhibit will be as successful as the Island Artist Exhibit," he added.

Moteisou revealed that the Island Artist Exhibit sold over \$2,000 worth of arts and crafts.

"The hotel lobby is really a great venue for the exhibit because it draws the interest of the tourists and hotel guests, majority of whom are the ones who buy the artists' masterpieces," he added.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-12-009

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF WATER DIVISION ANNUAL MATERIALS

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Supply and Delivery of Water Division Annual Materials for Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Bid Package may be obtained, upon receipt of a non-refundable payment from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one set; at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

CUC may award a contract to more than one firm for the materials based on bids for "Commodity Groups".

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-IFB-12-009, Supply & Delivery of Water Division Annual Materials**", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 4, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **April 4, 2012 at 10:00 AM, (ChST)** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract.

The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods.

Bidders will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions with regards to CUC-RFP-12-009 must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on **March 19, 2012** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email - manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Joel Hoepner, CUC Water/Wastewater Division Engineer via email joel.hoepner@cucgov.org and Janina Muna, CUC Procurement & Supply Administrative Assistant via email mika.muna@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ABE UTU MALAE
Executive Director



Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND
"Investing For The Future Financial Security Of Our Members"

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
SALE/ASSIGNMENT OF LOANS
RFP NO. RF 12-006**

OPENING DATE: February 8, 2012

CLOSING DATE: March 12, 2012

The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund is seeking proposals from qualified financial institutions including government agencies interested in purchasing and capable of servicing the Fund's loan portfolios made under the Fund's Member Home Loan Program.

To receive the RFP packet, fax, e-mail or mail your request to:

Richard S. Villagomez, Administrator
Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund
P.O. Box 501247 CK
Saipan, MP 96950-1247
Fax: (670) 664-8080
E-mail: administrator01@nmiretirement.com

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in a proposal if doing so is in the best interest of the Fund. All proposals shall become the property of the NMI Retirement Fund.

Bridge Capital mulls art gallery for CNMI artists

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After its generous donation for the 31st Annual Flame Tree Arts Festival, Bridge Capital, LLC now looks at sponsoring a venue where Arts Council-registered artists can display their work conspicuously "on a more permanent and larger scale."

"We just need to find a location," office manager/chief asset manager Allen Perez told Arts Council staff in a meeting at the Bridge Capital office last week.

Perez emphasized that the lo-

cation should be "accessible to the masses" to get a lot of promotion for talented local artists.

Garapan, he said, would be an ideal location for many people because of the ease of access not only for the artists but also the viewing public, unlike the current Arts Council gallery next to the post office in Capitol Hill.

However, there are properties in Garapan that are big enough "but the cost is unreasonable," said Perez.

He added that government buildings or properties can also be utilized for this art gallery.



Perez assured that Bridge Capital will continue to work with the Arts Council to find the right location for the art gallery.

"Bridge Capital could really be the catalyst to get this thing going and our idea is just to have our local artists have a venue to display and sell their artwork. With the assistance from Arts Council and other government agencies and private or non-profit groups, we could make this happen," added Perez.

Arts Council executive director Angel S. Hocog welcomed the news, saying that this initiative could well be the gallery that the council has longed for the CNMI's traditional and contemporary artists.

Bridge Capital office manager/chief asset manager Allen Perez gestures as he talks about plans to sponsor an art gallery for Arts Council artists last Wednesday.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

'CNMI in very good position to get grants to improve broadband access'

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

With the availability of computers and internet connection in the islands, the Commonwealth is in a "very good" position to receive federal funds that would facilitate more accessible and affordable broadband services for the public, according to the results of a survey conducted by the global non-profit group One Economy Corp.

The survey is part of the CNMI's first ever broadband mapping program aimed at developing and maintaining a comprehensive, interactive, and searchable nationwide map of existing broadband capability and availability throughout each state or territory.

Results of the survey, funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through the National Telecommunications Information Administration, are currently being discussed in town hall meetings conducted by One Economy Corp. representatives with their local partners on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Daniel Calarco, director of international programs for One Economy Corp., said in an interview last Thursday that the CNMI has a lot of "pre-requisites" in place such as computers and laptop as well as internet wiring in households, making it easy for them to turn on the internet connection.

For the survey which One Economy conducted last year, Calarco said they interviewed 867 respondents on Saipan and 100 each on Tinian and Rota.

The survey revealed that 99 percent of Saipan respondents have access to the Internet, which he described as "way above the national average." Meanwhile, Tinian had 5 percent who said they didn't have access while 17 percent from Rota claimed the same thing.

Calarco said Internet users are currently paying between \$50 and \$60. "What that says to us

is people consider the internet to be very important," he told *Saipan Tribune*. "They really want to have it but at the same time, the wages here are low so it's very difficult for people to afford the internet. So people are making sacrifices to be able to purchase internet at home. They say they want it but they're very high rates and that for a lot of people, it's just unaffordable."

The broadband mapping process, Calarco said, will enable them to recommend ways to bring the prices down so that people can get internet access "at a price point that makes sense for them."

With this finding, Calarco said the only thing that needs to be done is improving the "middle-mile" broadband capacity which entails increasing cabling competition going to Guam and the mainland to provide users adequate Internet connectivity.

He noted that customers are currently paying higher for internet services because of the shortage in this middle-mile broadband capacity. "It's really going to be likely that improving that kind of access will improve [internet services] here," said Calarco.

Calarco encouraged the public to attend the town hall meetings they will be conducting until April to ensure that the data they collected are "accurate," "make sense to people," and "reflect the reality" in the islands before they report back to the NTIA and the Federal Communications Commission and say that there are areas in these territories that are unserved in terms of broadband access.

"We're having people fill in gaps, if there are any," he added.

Calarco said all data will be part of the CNMI's digital blueprint for CNMI which is expected to be released by the end of the year. The finalized blueprint will show their recommendations to the U.S. Department of Commerce and the FCC, which are both concerned "that there

are people in America that don't have [Internet] access."

Calarco arrived last Monday with One Economy program manager for mapping initiatives Colin Richardson. They conducted a town hall meeting on Tinian the following day. He said Rota's meeting had to be moved this week due to flight schedule issues.

Richardson, on the other hand, emphasized on the need for Internet users to participate in the internet speed test

at www.measurementlab.net/run-ndt which uploads data directly into the federal broadband map data.

"The purpose of this is to be able to see whether the speeds that people get match up with the speeds that providers say they are giving people. The more people that take this speed test, the more data we'll have—hard, quantifiable data we'll be able to show the FCC and the Department of Commerce," he explained.

Calarco added that Internet users should take the speed test in different times of the day and in various locations to better help the study.

Given the challenging task of getting more people to attend town hall meetings, Calarco said there will be a winner of a Flip video camera in the town hall meetings they host. The incentives were donated by Cisco, he added.

Calarco urged the public to take part both in the broadband

mapping program's planning phase, which ends this year, and the actual mapping phase which goes on until 2015.

"There's no guarantee that any of our recommendations will be funded but at the very least, there will be a Department of Commerce-funded study that says if you are going to be making investments in CNMI internet, these are the ways it should go as determined by One Economy and the Department of Commerce study," he said.



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Volunteers: Elena Soll, Christy Villaflor & iGive iCare Volunteers, Laurie Peterka, Jon Cramer, Shelly Scott, Mili Saiki, Amie McRoberts, Anna Yamada, Phyllisina Reyes, Esther & Al Sound, Tyce Mister, Russ Quinn, JR Gechig, John Nekaifes, AJ Castro, Andy Nutting, Linda Anastacio, Theresa Miller, Kim Peterson, Gabriel White, Chris Shepherd, Tomo Obata, Azumi Ishida, Mike Pai, MVA staff, Fiesta Staff & Management, and all of our many student volunteers



FIVB
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DE VOLLEYBALL



MARIANAS JUNIOR CUP



MARIANAS PRO-AM CUP



MARIANAS KIDS CUP



AVC

Sandy Beach Homes drops monthly rent

Sandy Beach Homes, the CNMI's first Low Income Housing Tax Credit residential complex, has dropped its rent to \$695/month effective March 1, 2012, in line with a new utility allowance rate adopted by Northern Marianas Housing Corp. last week.

The housing complex is funded under the federal LI-HTC housing program through NMHC.

"We understand this is a difficult time for families and individuals," said Sandy Beach Homes managing partner Bob Jones. "NMHC has calculated that, on average, households are paying more for their utilities today than a year ago. In line with that, we have also reduced our rent at Sandy Beach Homes to help those families who need it most."

Each of the homes has three bedrooms, two bathrooms, washer/dryer, A/C, insulated



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Sandy Beach Homes complex sits in the heart of Chalan Kanoa, within walking distance of stores, banks, schools, churches, and the main post office.

double-paned windows, water purification system, solar water heater, and ceiling fans in every room. The refrigerator, stove, and dishwasher are Energy Star® rated. Additional amenities include security cameras, a balcony overlooking Saipan's

western lagoon, a parking garage, and typhoon shutters. There are also four ADA units available.

Interested individuals may visit the model home located in unit #210 from 9:30am to 5:30pm Monday through Fri-

day and from 8am to 12pm on Saturdays.

The Sandy Beach Homes complex sits in the heart of Chalan Kanoa, within walking distance of stores, banks, schools, churches, and the main post office. The opportunity to stay at Sandy Beach Homes is open to all legal CNMI residents, including non-U.S. citizens, as long as income and other eligibility requirements are met. Families or unrelated individuals in a group living arrangement may apply as a household.

Applications, a list of required documents, and details about the homes can be found at www.sandybeachhomes.net. Applicants are encouraged to bring their applications for assistance during the open house.

For more information, e-mail the leasing office at leasing@sandybeachhomes.net or call 235-7263 (SAND). (PR)

Hopwood wins 2nd place at Academic Bee Challenge Bowl

The five-person team from Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood Junior High School won second place at the 10th Annual Jr. High Academic Bee Challenge Bowl held at the Saipan Southern High School last Feb. 25.

The team first competed at individuals at the school level competition with a total of 39 competitors. The members of the team are Masrur Alam, Mikhail Alcantara, Joshua Mendiola, Eliezh Mendoza, and Edna Nisola.

The team's coaches are Carmelita Ada and Sharleen Crisostimo. The team would like to thank their parents and families, principal, Jonas Barcinas, vice principals John Pialur and Epi Cabrera, their cohort team teachers and all AHGHJS teachers and staff for their support, especially Victoria Nishida, Ruby Hocog and Freddy Salavaria.

Hopwood hails STEM Fair winners

Hopwood Junior High School also held its school level STEM Fair last Feb. 15. The following students participated in the competition: Marvin Seman, Jamila Alegre, Panida Eitz, Dianne Sabino, Ilyssa Geronimo, Hannah Hofschneider, Yea



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the 10th Annual Jr. High Academic Bee Challenge Bowl champion team from Hopwood Junior High School pose with their principal Jonas Barcinas.

Rin Kwon, Angel Pamintuan, Mikayla Lopez, Mikhail Alcantara, Kyle Egan, Pan Rou Lun, Pauline Salazar, Rhea Banados, Fariha Omar, Vanessa Gramlich, Patrick Agustin, Chrystalle Lloren, Rhgen Puntilar, Myrnel Fukuichi, Tins Islam, Noshin Omar, Lee Yeji, Josephine Estrada, Djaymarch Ong, Jayrald Mercene, Robert Malate, Ezekiel Rafanan, Joshua Zulueta,

and Ann Margaret Norcio.

First place went to Patrick Agustin. Second place was a three-way tie and went to Kyle Egan, Mikayla Lopez, and Ann Margaret Norcio. Third place went to Hannah Hofschneider.

Two honorable mentions went to Vanessa Gramlich and Ruo Lun Pan. These seven top scoring students represented the school at the island-wide STEM

Fair held at Saipan Southern High last March 3, 2012. Congratulations to all the students. Special thanks to their parents, guardians, and teachers for their support, to Mr. Jonas Barcinas, Mr. Brian Morris, and Ms. Livia Pangelinan for judging, all science teachers, AHGHJS Journalism class, Mr. Freddy Salavaria, and Pacific Amusement Inc. for the beautiful trophies. (PR)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Playdate for new moms and their kids

M.O.T.T.s (Moms of Tiny Tots) is a fun playdate group for moms with children around 0 to 18 months old. The group will meet Tuesday, March 6, at 10:30am and then every *other* Tuesday following. It is located at Church 360, Suite 103 in the Marianas Business Plaza (the former Nauru Building). So come on out for a time of fun and fellowship with a bunch of cool ladies and their kiddos! For more information, call Kayla at 888-2116 or visit the website at www.church360saipan.org and look under the "Events" tab. (PR)

Air Force training on Farallon de Medinilla

The U.S. Air Force will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on March 5-9, from 7am to 5pm. The general public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated. The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. (PR)

General farmers meeting

This is to inform all farmers that the Department of Lands and Natural Resources will be hosting a general farmers meeting for election of new administrators for the Saipan and Northern Islands Soil and Water Conservation District. The term of office for the new administrators is from fiscal year 2012 to 2015. The meeting will be held at the Kagman Division of Agriculture station on Wednesday, March 14, 2012, from 10am to 11:30am. For more information or any concerns, call 256-3319 and ask for Diana Gabaldon. (PR)

KHS progress reports out next week

To all parents/guardians of Kagman High School: Progress reports will be issued next week Wednesday, March 7, 2012, from 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Teachers will distribute for all subjects. Please ask your child for their 1st – 4th period teachers' and classroom numbers. This will lessen your time on where to go when you are getting their progress report. It will be a regular bell schedule and there will be no half-day schedule. Students will be dismissed at 2:50pm. For more information, call the KHS office at 237-3840 or e-mail kagmanhs@gmail.com. (PR)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Mar. 5, 1999

Senator: Civic duties deserve govt payback

Irked over failure by the Department of Finance to reimburse some expenditures of the legislature, Senate Vice President Thomas P. Villagomez said yesterday he would amend the in-house rules to allow members to charge costs incurred from meeting their obligations in the community. He also lashed out at Finance Secretary Lucy DLG Nielsen for denying reimbursements to legislators on community activities such as providing tents for wake, locally known as Rosary. "I feel insulted when the public auditor and the finance secretary say that tent rentals for Rosaries should not be considered as a community need," the senator said.

Governor throws garment bill to counsels

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday withheld action on a crucial proposal seeking to cap the number of foreign workers employed in the garment industry considered an increase by some lawmakers pending review by his legal counsels. The governor said he would like to scrutinize the number proposed in House Bill 11-315, which sets at 15,727 the garment workers who would be allowed to work in the Northern Marianas. Tenorio, who just came from Washington to lobby against the White House's fresh plan to take over local immigration and minimum wage policies, said he is worried over the bill's potential impact on the a law banning entry of guest workers into CNMI.

Mar. 5, 2002

'Section 902 is correct'

Yes, Section 902 is correct. Administration officials clarified yesterday that Gov. Juan N. Babauta was correct when he referred to Section 902 in his February 26 letter to U.S. President George W. Bush. In that letter, Babauta said he is appointing Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente to represent the Commonwealth in negotiating for the continuation of multi-year financial assistance to the CNMI, pursuant to Section 902 of the Covenant. A prior report have said the Governor may actually have been referring to Section 702 of the Covenant, which specifies the funding levels for the multi-year federal financial assistance that is specified in Article VII of the Covenant.

Chamber backs land initiatives

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce threw its full support behind Legislative Initiatives 13-002, 13-003 and 13-004, which would allow for a CNMI-wide vote to amend current Articles XI and XII, where public and private land leases could be extended for longer leasehold terms. Chamber president Richard A. Pierce said the business organization "supports the move to create longer leasehold terms, as well as legally defining any move to purchase an existing lease for an assurance that the new lease would be at maximum term limits, if desired." The Chamber believes that minimal achievements are needed for the initiatives to provide the economic stimulus intended, and prove sound financially to lending institutions, and promises to work with the CNMI Legislature and Administration toward this end. SCC will submit testimony at public hearings.

Mar. 5, 2003

MPLA working out settlement terms with Atalig on land grabbing case

The Marianas Public Lands Authority Board of Directors is now working on its settlement agreement with its member, Pedro Atalig, who is facing a land-grabbing lawsuit. Speaking for the board yesterday, MPLA deputy commissioner Frank Elliptico neither confirmed nor denied reports that the board has already decided to drop the case it had filed against Atalig. But he admitted that a settlement agreement with the former judge and now MPLA board member is now being worked out. "The terms of the settlement are not yet finalized so it would be premature for MPLA to comment at this time," said Elliptico.

CUC to get DLNR's land in Kagman

The Department of Land and Natural Resources has agreed to give its wastewater land in Kagman to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. for its sewer project, authorities said. Charles Jordan, the Governor's special assistant for capital improvement projects, told the CUC board Friday that the DLNR would not be using the land. Jordan, however, said that formal transfer of the land would have to be made by the Marianas Public Lands Authority.

Island Snapshots

TINIAN HOT PEPPER FESTIVAL

The 8th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was held last Feb. 18 and 19, 2012, at Tachogna Beach.

MVA



PUSONG PINOY

CLARISSA V. DAVID

United Filipino Organization president Bong Malasarte, right, delivers his remarks at the start of the Ms. Pusong Pinoy Valentine beauty pageant at the Civic Center grounds last Feb. 12.



FUND MEETING

MONETH G. DEPOSA

Wilshire Consulting Associates principal Maggie Ralbovsky discusses with NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees and guest House Speaker Eli Cabrera during a recent meeting the serious situation of the pension agency which urgently needs infusion of fresh money to buy time to avert its collapse.



NMHC BOARD MEETING

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Northern Marianas Housing Corp. Mortgage and Credit Division manager Jesse Palacios, standing, shows board chair Marcie Tomokane documents during the board meeting at the corporation's conference room in Garapan late last month.



Youngsters prepare to start the *umang* (hermit crab) race at the 8th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival last Feb. 18 and 19, 2012.

MVA



Tinian resident Bill Cing prepares to add *donne sali* (hot pepper) to his winning *estafao pika* (spicy stew) at the 8th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival last Feb. 18 and 19, 2012.

MVA



Entries in the *mwars* (floral head lei) making contest at the 8th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival held last Feb. 18 and 19, 2012.

MVA



Pikalicious Team topped the co-ed Tinian Hot Pepper Festival 4-Person Beach Volleyball Tournament 2012 held last Feb. 18 and 19 at Tachogna Beach, Tinian.

MVA

Opinion

Hafa Adahi!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

As recent violence over burning of Qurans shows, US mission fragile

Three Republican presidential candidates are shamelessly criticizing President Barack Obama for apologizing to the government of Afghanistan for the incineration of Qurans at a U.S. military base in that country. Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum should be praising the president instead, not only because acknowledging the offense to Muslim sensibilities was the decent thing to do but because it may have prevented an even worse backlash than the one that has cost four American lives so far.

That said, the violence—in which more Afghans than Americans have been killed—is an ominous reminder of the fragility of the relationship between the United States and its allies on the one hand, and an Afghan populace wearied by a decade of Western occupation on the other. Especially shocking was the execution-style murder of two U.S. service members assigned to the supposedly secure precincts of the Interior Ministry. The gunman, who is still at large, is suspected of being an Afghan police intelligence officer. Afterward, U.S. commanders withdrew Western military advisers from various Afghan ministries as a precaution. The symbolism was stark: Americans couldn't trust their Afghan allies.

As tragic as it was, the shooting at the Interior Ministry is only one incident. U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Ryan Crocker was right to reject the notion that it justified suddenly abandoning cooperation between NATO and an Afghan government that is belatedly taking on more responsibility for the country's security. Crocker also properly contrasted the gunman's betrayal with the fact that "the Afghan security forces, throughout this whole process, have been seeking to quell these demonstrations. They've done so with loss of life on their side as well as some of the protesters, and they have been defending U.S. installations." That perspective is an important one. Crocker suggests that the next step is to "let things calm down, return to a more normal atmosphere and then get on with business."

But the anti-American violence that followed the Quran burning may have more to do with the "normal atmosphere" of Afghan-U.S. relations than Crocker wants to admit. Despite talk of partnership and common interests, Americans and Afghans remain divided culturally and religiously. Many Afghans don't believe Obama's assurances that the damage to the Qurans was "inadvertent."

After stabilizing the military situation in Afghanistan with a surge of 33,000 troops in late 2009, Obama is now withdrawing forces, and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has expressed hope that the U.S. combat role in the country will end in 2013, a year earlier than NATO originally estimated. Meanwhile, the U.S. is gingerly exploring the possibility of a political solution in Afghanistan while reorienting its anti-terror strategy to targeted attacks on individuals. Someday—sooner rather than later, we hope—U.S. troops will be gone and there will be less of an opportunity for clashes of culture like the conflict over the burning of the Quran.

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The rocky path to prosperity

This week I wish to share some of my thoughts about how we can improve in the hope that you will also think about this very important matter. Remember all I am trying to do is to get us to think through our problems. I don't profess to know the answers, but collectively we do. Then when we muster up the courage and will, we can solve them.

Unless we change our attitudes about ourselves and our community, we will continue to slide down until utter bankruptcy both morally and economically. No, this is not a doomsday predication because the rest of America and Europe is suffering the same as we. We must learn from their mistakes and mend our ways.

This week I just finished reading a very exciting book. It is entitled: *The Price of Civilization* by Jeffrey D. Sachs who is one of the world's leading scholars and economic advisers to governments and international organizations around the world. Here is a quote from the author that captures his theme in the book:

"At the root of America's economic crisis lies a moral crisis: the decline of civic virtue among America's political and economic elite. A society of markets, laws, and elections is not enough if the rich and powerful fail to behave with respect, honesty and compassion toward the rest of society and toward the world. America has squandered its civic virtue along the way. Without restoring an ethos of social responsibility, there can be no meaningful and sustained economic recovery."

Mr. Sachs concludes that the one sure way out of this morose situation is:

"We need to be ready to pay the price of civilization through multiple acts of good citizenship: bearing our fair share of taxes, educating ourselves deeply about society's needs, acting as vigilant stewards for future generations and remembering that compassion is the glue that holds society together."

By now we are thinking how does this affect our little world of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas? The United States is facing serious challenges which also affect us here deeply. Both in the U.S. and in the CNMI, the list of recent government failures is long and growing. We can feel this pain in the reduction of grants and funding for various projects given to us by the United States.

Our nonresident labor laws are a nightmare and are causing chaos both to employees and employers. We are fast using up any money previously saved in the MPLT account. We are a whisper away from bankruptcy in the Retirement Fund. The Commonwealth hospital is unable to pay its vendors and salaries to its staff. Government employees receive barely 32 hours a week of work time. So it goes on and on. We are actually bankrupt. And the slide downhill keeps getting worse with no relief in sight.

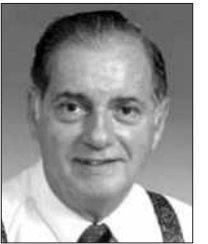
The big question is can we pull ourselves back to prosperity? We can if we are willing to pay the price. Let's look at the price we will have to pay.

Mr. Sachs proposes that the federal government adopt "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Governments." I strongly suggest that the CNMI government consider adopting them also. After reading them, what do we the citizens think? Can we apply them to our situation or not? Will these steps help us? Let's decide and then take action.

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is a former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.



1. Set Clear Goals and Benchmarks:

Have we set clear goals? If so what are they? If not, why haven't we set them? How can we go on a journey without a roadmap? We must define our economic goals. Along with goal setting we must use benchmarks which show how we compare with other countries. All great leaders set goals. A classic model for setting clearly defined goals was former President John F. Kennedy. It might be wise for some of our leaders to study his insightful ways.

2 Mobilize Expertise:

Our problems have become more complex than ever before. They involve not only local matters pertaining to us, but also international. Some have to with visas, foreign investors, land ownership, foreign laborers, military intervention, electricity generation and distribution, safe and ample water supply, proper use of land, health problems, financing of projects, relations with the United States, and many others.

How many of our leaders are versed in depth on any of the above subjects? We need both local and outside experts in the various fields to study and advise us. Why aren't we requesting this assistance from the United States instead of only begging for more money without plans and goals to strive towards? Are we too proud to request help in solving our problems?

3. Make Multiyear Plans

Even when we make plans they tend to be for only one year at a time. For example, we make annual budgets goals, and leave the following years to generate their own goals. One of the major reasons governments fail to plan more than one year at a time is because of the constant reelection of politicians every two years. Plans take time to implement and evolve. They must be adaptive over time, and be open to a wide range of participants from business, government agencies, and society in general.

4. Be mindful of the future:

We cannot peer into the distant future, but we can still train ourselves and orient our political system to be mindful of the future. We must use our resources wisely so that future generations will have some to use also. We must be mindful of all our doings as to how they will affect the future. Are we doing this now?

5. End the Corporatocracy:

This point considers reducing the influence between government and private enterprises. In the U.S. most of politics is controlled by huge campaign contributions which influence who will be elected and what policies will be adopted by the government.

Do we remember the \$6,700,000.00 paid by our government several years ago to Jack Abramoff from 1995 to 2001? It is this kind

See PROSPERITY on Next Page

The march of the volunteers

Across China today, volunteers pan the social landscape to perform unpaid good deeds. “Unpaid” is the operative word on the current generation, unusual since Deng Xiao Ping opened the floodgates to capitalism and the free market. The post-Cultural Revolution babies grew up with the understanding that anything one does must of necessity entail a monetary recompense. Add the one child policy where parents who lost patience on the time-consuming task of persuasion got into the habit of bribing their children, and the sole child paid to comply to a request, or obey a demand, reigns.

I knew a girl once already past a score who held her parents captive to her wishes unless she was substantially bribed! Derided as ‘little emperors’, their numbers are substantial in the urban centers. Volunteerism is not one of their great attributes.

We do not normally associate “volunteers” to Zhongguoren. Those of us outside the East Asian mainland still call the country “Red” China with a menacing tone reserved for unfriendly faeries on Halloween! In 2008, after the Zichuan earthquake and the Beijing Olympics, we regarded volunteers as essentially propaganda faces for show fawningly eager to project a favorable face to the unfriendly, if not belligerent, west.

The 150 national pavilions and 2 million gate till crossers during the Shanghai Expo changed all that as the world was genuinely feted with volunteers who made the event run smoothly and established a friendly tone in the people management of the high tech global exposition focused on urban settlements.

All these sound strange given our years of brainwashing to be wary of the red menace. But in our task to teach the English language by capitalizing on familiar sounds and tunes, we discovered that the National Anthem of China came from a 1934 song called the “March of the Volunteers”, penned against the backdrop of resistance against Japanese expansion after Nippon occupied Man-

churia.

Ironically, the Nationalists (Guomindang aka Kuomintang) of Chiang-Kai-Shek banned the song because the author was a leftist intellectual. It also highlighted the fact that the real resistance during the second Sino-Nippon war came from groups of volunteers rather than from the government’s military. The song was later adopted as the national anthem when the Gongchandang of Mao Zedong led the PRC.

Diminutive soldier “boy” Lei Feng who we mentioned in an article on our recent visit to Yingkou enhanced the image of the volunteer. The 21-year-old boy from Mao’s Hunan became a PLA soldier, met his un-heroic demise over a bumped electric pole in Liaoning, but his fame came from his reflections on a diary he wrote, ala Anne Frank.

The selfless style reflected in his writings caught the eye of CPP propaganda after his death in ’63, and while America was morally stunned and conscience stricken by MLK, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech at the Mall in Washington, D.C., Lei Feng became the poster boy of dedication and selflessness of every Red Book quoting Red Guard from Yunnan to Heilongjiang.

March 5, neither Lei Feng’s birthday or death anniversary, is a remembrance of a selfless fellow, now with the added caveat on modesty when the young students render their version of their “day on, rather than day off” service akin to that used to honor MLK Day in the US of A.

The power of mass action was evident in the three snowstorms we had while the University was in session last semester. With all the rescue and emergency vehicles deployed on the streets and highways, the student pilots and stewardesses, along with their engineering and business management counterparts, came out with their pick and shovels, chipped away at encrusted ice on the sidewalks and pavements, not missing a beat on their aca-

By JAIME VERGARA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

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demetic time and still managing to clear pathways and roads within 48 hours after the storm.

When governance is more intent in preserving power than delivering service, we have the likes of... oh, never mind. I forgot. This is about volunteers in China.

A nation of volunteers, China is not. In fact, the incidences of greed demonstrated by Wall Street is nothing compared to the less than kosher methods of acquiring wealth the Solicitor General of the nation is now out to confront, or, at least, be seen as acting upon, on sectors as varied as construction, real estate, manufacturing, land acquisition, public works, ecological protection, and not the least, the financial markets.

If the current TV soap operas are any indication of the pervasive influence of money as the measure of one’s social face, then the vaunted and much heralded Chinese filial tranquility itself is in danger.

But at least, the society is airing out its linen in public. This is why the sudden rediscovery and emphasis of doing things past promise of financial remuneration, and the reawakening compliance of the public to this ethos, can only be a plus to a nation of folks now known as marked with the Renminbi sign on their forehead.

We remember Lei Feng today.

Move over, Egypt, Iraq and Syria

For the better part of the last century, three Arab states—Egypt, Iraq and Syria—dominated Middle East politics in matters of war and peacemaking and shaped the region’s relations with the great powers.

The kings of Jordan and Morocco—and, of course, Saudi Arabia (and the Persian Gulf states) when it came to oil—had their say too. But it was the three pseudo-republics, authoritarian military regimes really, that threw their collective weight around.

Not anymore. The changes sweeping the Arab world have injected new life and meaning into its politics. But that has also fundamentally undermined the capacity of the key Arab states to act decisively and coherently on the regional stage.

It’s the new world of the non-Arabs—Iran, Israel and Turkey—that will now increasingly shape that stage for both good and ill. No matter how long it lasts, the eclipse of the Arabs will carry important consequences for the Middle East and the United States’ interests there.

For decades, Egypt, Iraq and Syria, cooperating at times but competing for influence and power always, shaped the Arab world’s policies toward East and West, drove the alliances and maneuvering in inter-Arab politics, determined what would and would not happen when it came to Israel, and carried out their own ambitions. These three republics and the men who dominated them became the face of the Arabs to the world.

Egypt held the key to peacemaking with Israel, Iraq to stability in the Persian Gulf and Syria to Lebanon. America would come to depend heavily on the first, go to war twice with the second and both court and try to check the ambitions of the third. With some exceptions, it was a world that had acquired a perverse kind of stability. The status quo was hardly perfect, but it was, particularly after the Iraq war and the demise of Saddam Hussein, relatively manageable for the Arabs and the West.

Now all of that is gone. Within a year — a stunningly inconsequential unit of time in the grand sweep of Middle Eastern history — these three Arab states have gone off line. In the case of Iraq, this has been in the works for some time now. Iraq is becoming a dysfunctional state marked by continuing violence and unable to create a legitimate political contract. Its Shiite-dominated regime and

Sunni rivals will continue to wrangle at the expense of a functional and effective governance.

Egypt, preoccupied with its internal house and seeking a newfound independence from the United States, may want a more ambitious role in the region. But it probably will be unable to deliver. Its economy is in shambles. And its political system is locked in a competition between Islamists and the military, both of which seem to want influence without the real responsibilities of governance. A vacuum has been created that will ensure that this struggle continues without an effective government to deal with Egypt’s galactic economic problems or to undertake necessary reforms. Egypt’s voice will be loud, criticizing Israel and the U.S. and trying to broker Palestinian reconciliation, but its impact will be small.

Whatever the fate of Bashar Assad, Syria’s capacity to project power on the regional stage has been dramatically reduced. The Assads — father and son — always played a weak hand well. Syria had power and influence — a strong military, a ruthlessness and skill in manipulating Lebanon, an emerging relationship with the West, even a disengagement with Israel on the Golan Heights, and a strategic bond with Iran. All of that was a function of a powerful regime. And now all of it is collapsing. Nobody knows what will happen, but the trend lines look increasingly like fragmentation of authority if not civil war. And for the foreseeable future, Syria’s capacity to rule Lebanon, to seek the return of the Golan Heights and to throw its weight around the region is gone.

Unlike the Arabs, the “nons” have been rising for some time. With strong militaries, coherent political and economic systems and strong ties to one or more great powers, Iran, Israel and Turkey are effective actors. They each have a strong sense of national identity and purpose. More important, they are all stable countries, capable of asserting their power in defense of their own interests.

Israel has built a vibrant economy, a dominant military and maintains a strategic relationship with the United States. Iran has benefited enormously from the end of Saddam Hussein, the weakening of the Iraqi polity and the rise in oil prices. It has continued to pursue its aim of developing at least the capacity to produce a nuclear weapon. Turkey has managed—unlike any Arab state—to find a balance between Islam and modernity that allows it to be relatively

By AARON DAVID MILLER

Los Angeles Times

Aaron David Miller, a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, served as a Middle East negotiator in Republican and Democratic administrations. He is the author of the forthcoming “Can America Have Another Great President?” He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.



democratic, competitive and highly relevant both in the Arab and Muslim worlds and in the West too.

All, of course, also function under serious constraints. Turkey’s policy of maintaining close ties with every Arab/Muslim country has posed serious headaches as Iran and Syria have become international pariahs. Iran is not only a repressive state that faced serious internal opposition and could face more, but it is subject to potentially crippling sanctions from Europe and the United States. But what is so intriguing about the Iranians and the Israelis too is that even in the face of pressure, both have managed to maintain their own interests: Iran in resisting pressure to retard its nuclear program; Israel in its ability to maintain its security interests and to resist pressure to settle the Palestinian issue on any terms to which it’s opposed.

The eclipse of the Arabs carries few positive consequences for the United States. Egypt will become a much less reliable partner as both its public and elites hammer America for its policies on Israel; Iraq will probably remain violent and unstable, certainly not a reliable buffer against Iranian ambitions; and Syria, an adversary that the U.S. at least knew, is evolving into a terra incognita, a potentially fractured polity in which regional powers and sectarian conflict will produce even greater instability. And in the interim, Iran’s efforts to acquire a capacity to produce a nuclear weapon, and Israel’s efforts to stop it, may drive the region closer to war.

Welcome to the new Middle East; it won’t look anything like the old.

PROSPERITY

From Page 10

of cancer that destroys ethical government by the people and for the people. The dollar reigns supreme. Is this buying of government favors still exist in the CNMI? Can we think of ways to curb this practice in the CNMI?

6. Restore Public Management:

We need educated managers to head the various agencies, not political payoffs. How many of our appointees are trained and educated to head the agencies they are selected to head? We need

trained professional managers, not political appointees, and they should be senior civil service appointments. We must stop favoring incompetent appointees. But do you think this will ever happen here?

7. Decentralize:

The CNMI is no longer just made up of Chamorro and Carolinians.

We have citizens of various countries residing here. There are many Americans, Filipinos, Koreans, Chinese, Palaun’s, and other nationalities. Are we learning to live together without racism? Do we realize all the benefits we gain from such diversity?

Mr. Sachs suggests that the above seven roads to prosperity are the price we and the American people will have to pay to regain our prosperity coupled with ethics and compassion for one another. These points create a holistic approach to restoring the greatness we once enjoyed.

In closing, we need government, but it must be more competent and honest. Economic reform and political reform must go hand in hand. Some of our citizens will smile and call the above suggestions nonsense because they are too impossible to achieve. What is the alternative? More sliding downhill? Can we at least try some of the above suggestions?






Who can provide the political base for cleaning up our government? All of us should look towards the group with the biggest stake: young people! Consider the power that lies in the hands of our youth from eighteen to thirty-five! These young warriors are still fresh and untainted. Their future rests on their shoulders. Because we have destroyed their future, they must rebuild it. And I truly believe they can and will! Let’s give them the opportunity. They cannot do worse than we have.

Oh, yes, don’t forget to SMILE. Let’s put a spark in each other’s heart. A giant SMILE will do it! Have a great week!

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 86° ▼ 77°	▲ 86° ▼ 77°	▲ 86° ▼ 75°	▲ 86° ▼ 75°	▲ 86° ▼ 75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲ 85 ▼ 78
Palau	Cloudy	▲ 86 ▼ 79
Yap	Showers	▲ 89 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲ 90 ▼ 79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 79
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 79
Majuro	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 78

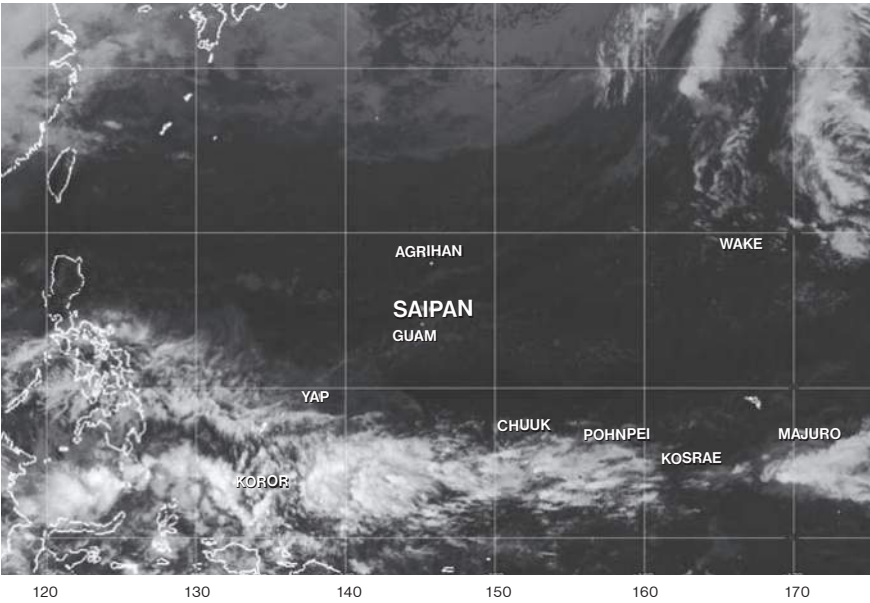
Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲ 69 ▼ 61
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 52 ▼ 29
Hong Kong	Showers	▲ 68 ▼ 66
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲ 73 ▼ 69
London	Showers	▲ 47 ▼ 40
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 75 ▼ 51
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲ 91 ▼ 78
Melbourne	Showers	▲ 68 ▼ 57
Miami	Sunny	▲ 75 ▼ 60
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲ 42 ▼ 24
Osaka	Showers	▲ 57 ▼ 49
Paris	Ice	▲ 42 ▼ 36
Pusan	Showers	▲ 52 ▼ 39
Rome	Showers	▲ 63 ▼ 46
Salem	Showers	▲ 47 ▼ 31
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲ 64 ▼ 48
Seoul	Showers	▲ 44 ▼ 30
Tokyo	Showers	▲ 57 ▼ 48
Washington, DC	Snow	▲ 47 ▼ 29

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
4:54 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet	
9:33 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet	
2:34 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet	
10:21 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, MARCH 4, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak shear line near Guam is causing widely scattered showers within 75 miles of a line from 12N142E to 15N150E. Upper-level divergence and trade-wind convergence are producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across western Micronesia in an area from south of Koror to south of Chuuk and Pohnpei or between 7N and the equator from 130E to 150E and between 7N and 2N from 150E to 160E. Heavier embedded showers are between 6N and 2N from 138E to 145E. A trade-wind disturbance is triggering scattered showers between Majuro and Butaritari atolls within 125 miles of a line from 5N168E to beyond 4N180. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms associated with a frontal boundary are northeast of Wake Island within 125 miles of a line from 19N173E to 25N171E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:32 AM	6:26 PM
Tuesday	6:31 AM	6:26 PM
Wednesday	6:30 AM	6:26 PM
Thursday	6:30 AM	6:26 PM
Friday	6:29 AM	6:26 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:26 PM	3:37 AM
Tuesday	4:22 PM	4:23 AM
Wednesday	5:19 PM	5:09 AM
Thursday	6:17 PM	5:54 AM
Friday	7:16 PM	6:40 AM

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 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
■ **CAMPUS BULLETIN** Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
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 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP) C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN) C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily DL286 7:40pm 12:20am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7 DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6 DL580 10:10pm 2:55am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ704/603 11:40pm 2:20pm Daily via ICN C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 100	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



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- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Business

BP spill settlement clears way for comeback

NEW YORK (AP)—BP's multibillion-dollar settlement with people and businesses harmed by its 2010 oil spill

removes some uncertainty about the potential financial damages it faces. It also may help the company restore its

all-important relationship with the federal government.

Although the oil company still has a few major legal and

financial hurdles to overcome nearly two years after the spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the tentative settlement with plaintiff's lawyers sends important signals to investors, Gulf Coast states and federal regulators.

Where once it seemed conceivable that BP's spill-related costs could reach \$200 billion, lawyers and industry analysts now say that figure will likely be less than a quarter that amount. If the class-action lawsuit by victims had gone to trial, BP could have faced much higher costs along with the embarrassment of having to publicly rehash the mistakes

that led to the spill.

The settlement, which BP estimates will cost \$7.8 billion, also shows its willingness to pay a huge sum to resolve issues related to the spill. That may improve its standing with the federal government, which controls access to oil reserves that are critically important to BP's future.

"The only trial I thought we would see in this case is the one that just went away," said David Uhlmann, a University of Michigan law professor who once headed the Justice Department's environmental crimes section.

A blowout of the Macondo

well in April 2010 destroyed a drilling rig called the Deepwater Horizon. That killed 11 workers, spilled an estimated 200 million gallons of oil and disrupted thousands of Gulf Coast lives and businesses. The spill soiled sensitive tidal estuaries and beaches, killed wildlife and closed vast areas of the Gulf to commercial fishing.

The settlement announced Friday would apply to tens of thousands of victims along the Gulf Coast, including fishermen who lost work and cleanup workers who got sick. It still needs approval of a federal court in New Orleans.

Environmental damages remain issue after BP deal

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—BP's settlement with plaintiffs suing the company over the 2010 oil spill disaster in the Gulf of Mexico may address harm to individuals and businesses, but there is nothing in it that compensates the public for damage to its natural resources and environment, the Justice Department said Saturday.

That's a potentially critical issue because a separate victims' claims fund that was set up months after the Deepwater Horizon rig explosion was also meant to cover environmental damages, but it's now expected to be used to cover the BP settlement with plaintiffs. BP said it expects to pay out \$7.8 billion in the settlement with the plaintiffs that was announced Friday.

It's not clear whether environmental claims will now have to be addressed separately between BP and the U.S. government, or whether it will be rolled up into their ongoing discussions over settling the fines and penalties

that the British company faces. Both issues also could be resolved at an eventual civil trial, which has now been postponed indefinitely.

The Justice Department noted that the settlement doesn't address "significant damages" to natural resources and the environment.

"While we are pleased that BP may be stepping up to address harms to individual plaintiffs, this by no means fully addresses its responsibility for the harms it has caused," the agency said in a statement to The Associated Press.

The spill soiled sensitive tidal estuaries and beaches, killed wildlife and closed vast areas of the Gulf to commercial fishing for months. Dispersants and siphoning equipment and other methods were successful in getting rid of much of the oil in the ocean, but some environmentalists believe oil beneath the surface could return one day to Gulf shores.

David Uhlmann, a University of Michigan Law School professor who previously

served as chief of the Justice Department's environmental crimes section, estimates that a deal between BP, the federal government and the states—one that includes criminal and civil penalties and resolves natural resource damage claims—would be worth between \$20 billion to \$25 billion.

BP still has to resolve claims by the U.S. government, Gulf states and its partners on the doomed Deepwater Horizon rig, which exploded and sank 50 miles off Louisiana after a BP oil well a mile below the ocean's surface blew out. Eleven rig workers were killed and, according to the government, more than 200 million gallons of oil spewed before the well was capped nearly three months later.

Rig owner Transocean and cement contractor Halliburton have rejected recent overtures to settle their claims with BP and pay billions of dollars, according to two people close to the case who spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks are confidential.

GM to suspend production of Chevrolet Volt

DALLAS (AP)—General Motors Co. is suspending production of its Chevrolet Volt electric car for five weeks amid disappointing sales.

A GM spokesman said Friday that the company will shut down production of the Volt from March 19 until April 23, idling 1,300 workers at the Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant.

The Volt was rolled out with great fanfare in late 2010 but has since hit bumps in the road. Sales have fallen short of expectations, and its reputation was bruised by an investigation into a possible fire risk.

It carries a high price tag—around \$41,000 before a U.S. tax credit of up to \$7,500. Rising gasoline prices should boost the Volt's appeal, but there are plenty of other less-expensive cars that also get good mileage.

GM sold 7,671 Volts last year, below its original goal of 10,000 cars. The company stopped publicly announcing sales targets last year. It sold 1,023 Volts in February and 603 in January.

"The fact that GM is now facing an oversupply of Volts suggests that consumer demand is just not that strong for these vehicles," said Lacey Plache, chief economist for auto information site Edmunds.com.

GM spokesman Chris Lee



In this Sunday, Feb. 19, 2012 photo, a 2012 Volt priced at more than \$45,000 is displayed for sale outside at a Chevrolet dealership in the south Denver suburb of Englewood, Colo.

said the company was "taking a temporary shutdown" of the assembly line.

"We're doing it to maintain our proper inventory levels as we align production with demand," he said.

Lee said a decision to allow Volt drivers to use carpool lanes in California should help demand. "We're just looking to increase sales, and we see a positive trend going forward," he said.

Although the Volt has not been a big seller, the low-emission vehicle has improved GM's reputation for innovation. Like its closest competitor, the Nissan Leaf, the Volt is rated at more than 90 miles per

gallon by the EPA. The Volt is powered by a 400-pound battery pack on which the car can travel about 35 miles before it needs recharging. After that, a gasoline-powered generator drives the electric motor.

Battery fires broke out in three Volts after safety crash-testing last year, but federal regulators determined that the car was no more risky than vehicles with conventional gasoline engines. GM and federal officials believe that the fires were caused by coolant leaking from damaged plastic casing around the batteries after side-impact test crashes. They say that they don't know of any such fires in regular use of the cars.



In this April 21, 2010 file photo provided by the U.S. Coast Guard, fire boat response crews spray water on the blazing remnants of BP's Deepwater Horizon offshore oil rig.

Ratings agency Moody's downgrades Greece

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—The ratings agency Moody's downgraded Greece to the lowest rating on its bond scale late Friday, following a deal with private investors that would see them ultimately lose an estimated 70 percent of their holdings in Greek debt.

Moody's lowered Greece's sovereign rating to C from Ca, arguing that the risk of default remains high even a bond-swap deal with banks and other private investors, due to be completed this month, is successful.

It said it would "re-assess the credit risk profile" after Greece issues the new bonds.

Ratings agency Standard & Poor's took similar action on Feb. 27.

The swap deal aims to cut euro107 billion (\$144 billion) from the country's debt, and would see private investors lose more than half the face value of their Greek bonds in exchange for new ones issued with more favorable repayment terms for the crisis-hit country.

The exchange is an integral

part of a second bailout package for Greece by other eurozone countries and the International Monetary Fund.

"Looking ahead, the EU program and proposed debt exchanges will reduce Greece's debt burden, but the risk of a default even after the debt exchange has been completed remains high," Moody's said.

"Moody's believes that Greece will still face medium-term solvency challenges: its stock of debt will still be well in excess of 100 percent of gross domestic product for many years, the country is unlikely to be able to access the private market once the second assistance package runs out, and its planned fiscal and economic reforms will still face very significant implementation risks."

Greece has been relying since May 2010 on rescue loans from eurozone partners and the IMF. But despite receiving euro73 billion from its initial euro110 billion bailout and pushing through tough austerity measures in return, the country has consistently

missed its reform targets.

To limit a threat to Europe's single currency, its leaders have agreed to extend the country a second bailout, this time worth euro130 billion (\$172 billion), which is accompanied by the debt reduction deal.

So far, the eurozone has agreed in principle to release the first batch of bailout loans to Greece to finance the bond-swap, with the final green light to due till come next week.

But harsh austerity has pushed the country into a fifth year of recession and seen the unemployment rate reach nearly 21 percent.

Earlier Friday, provisional figures from the finance ministry showed Greece posting a deficit in January of euro490 million (\$652 million), in contrast to last year's equivalent surplus of euro154 million.

The ministry's General Accounting Office said revenues during the month were hit by the expiry of a one-off business tax, as well as reduced revenues from consumption.

Nation

Storms demolish small towns in Ind., Ky.; 38 dead

WEST LIBERTY, Ky. (AP)—Across the South and Midwest, survivors emerged Saturday to find blue sky and splinters where homes once stood, cars flung into buildings and communications crippled after dozens of tornadoes chain-sawed through a region of millions, leveling small towns along the way.

At least 38 people were killed in five states, but a 2-year-old girl was somehow found alive and alone in a field near her Indiana home. Her family did not survive. A couple that fled their home for the safety of a restaurant basement made it, even after the storms threw a school bus into their makeshift shelter.

Saturday was a day filled with such stories, told as emergency officials trudged with search dogs past knocked-down cellphone towers and ruined homes looking for survivors in rural Kentucky and Indiana, marking searched roads and homes with orange paint. President Barack Obama offered federal assistance, and Ohio Gov. John Kasich declared an emergency Saturday.

The worst damage appeared centered in the small towns of southern Indiana and eastern Kentucky's Appalachian foothills. No building was untouched and few were recognizable in West Liberty, Ky., about 90 miles from Lexington, where two white police cruisers were picked up and tossed into City Hall.

"We stood in the parking lot

and watched it coming," said David Ison, who raced into a bank vault with nine others to seek safety. "By the time it hit, it was like a whiteout."

In East Bernstadt, two hours to the southwest, Carol Rhodes clutched four VHS tapes she'd found in debris of her former home as she sobbed under a

bright sun Saturday.

"It was like whooo, that was it," said Rhodes, 63, who took refuge with four family members in a basement bedroom that she had just refinished for a grandchild.

"Honey, I felt the wind and I said, 'Oh my God,' and then it (the house) was gone. I looked

up and I could see the sky."

The spate of storms was the second in little more than 48 hours, after an earlier round killed 13 people in the Midwest and South, and the latest in a string

of severe-weather episodes that have ravaged the American heartland in the past year.

Friday's violent storms touched down in at least a dozen states from Georgia to Illinois, killing

19 people in Kentucky, 14 in Indiana, three in Ohio, and one each in Alabama and Georgia.

The National Weather Service said the four twisters to hit Kentucky were the worst in the region in 24 years. In Indiana, an EF-4 tornado—the second-highest on the Fujita scale that measures tornadic force—packing 175 mph winds hit the town of Henryville, and stayed on the ground for more than 50 miles.

The storms scarred the landscape over hundreds of miles, leaving behind a trail of shredded sheet metal, insulation, gutted churches, crunched-up cars and even a fire hydrant.

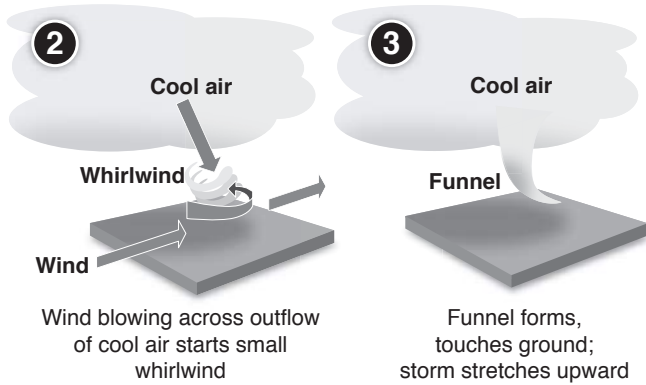
The trailer that was once the home of Viva Johnson's mother was sitting in a graveyard on Saturday, covering the dead alongside downed trees and other debris. "You can't even tell where the headstones are," said Johnson, who lives in Pulaski County, Ky.

Perfect conditions

Wherever atmospheric conditions are exactly right, the occurrence of a tornado is possible.

Storm brewing

Tornadoes form from thunderstorms; the combination of warm, moist air and cool, dry air creates instability



Damage done

The Enhanced Fujita (EF) scale is used to measure the strength of a tornado in wind speed and relative damage

Scale	Wind Speed
EF 0	65-85 mph (105-137 kph)
EF 1	86-110 (138-178)
EF 2	111-135 (179-218)
EF 3	136-165 (219-266)
EF 4	166-200 (267-322)
EF 5	More than 200 (322)

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association
Graphic: Samantha Piccirillo

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AP
Meloday Zollamn finds a stuffed bear as she looks through the rubble of her home that was destroyed by a tornado as residents attempt to recover their possession in Henryville, Ind., Saturday, March 3, 2012.

Dahmer victim's sister calls walking tour 'evil'

MILWAUKEE (AP)—The sister of one of Jeffrey Dahmer's 17 victims joined others in protesting a Milwaukee walking tour of the serial killer's haunts Saturday, calling out to tour organizers that they were "just as evil" as Dahmer himself.

Janie Hagen's brother, 25-year-old Richard Guerrero, disappeared in 1988 and was one of the first young men Dahmer is known to have murdered. On Saturday, Hagen criticized the new walking tour as merely an attempt to make money by turning her brother's murder into macabre entertainment.

"This whole thing opens up a lot of old wounds, a lot of painful memories," Hagen said while holding a sign calling tour-organizer Bam Media and Marketing heartless. "It's that same hurt all over again."

The new walking tour of places where Dahmer trolled for victims drew attention this week after criticism prompted online deal-maker Groupon to take down a promotion for discounted tickets. But Bam Media said it would not cancel what it calls a legitimate exploration of criminal history.

Hagen was one of about 20 protesters who followed the first small tour group of four customers Saturday. The protesters chanted, "Stop the tour," but generally kept their distance.

Tour guide Nicholas Vollmann wasn't dissuaded. He led the group up and down the street for about an hour, stopping at buildings that used to house the gay bars where Dahmer cruised for his victims. Reading from notecards, he named the victims whom Dahmer met at each place, detailed their sexual activity and

described how Dahmer killed and disposed of the victims.

Afterward he said sympathized with the protesters, but believed the tours would go on.

"The protests are not likely to continue," he said.

Dahmer, a chocolate factory worker, spent years frequenting Milwaukee-area gay bars. He was arrested in 1991 and admitted killing 17 young men, some of whom he mutilated and cannibalized. He was serving life prison sentences when a fellow inmate beat him to death in 1994.

The apartment building where Dahmer stored body parts eventually was razed. The area now sits in the middle of a revitalized section of Milwaukee, with new restaurants and bars in remodeled buildings that once housed the bars where Dahmer went.

A number of police cars

drove past Saturday as the tour group and protesters crossed paths. The two sides generally avoided conversation, except for occasional protesters calling on the tour group to desist.

"You're just as evil as he was!" Hagen shouted. "You're putting Milwaukee to shame!"

One protester held a sign that said, "You may not care but we do."

Several tour participants said they found the experience interesting and educational. One sightseer who identified himself as Paul Smith, 26, of Waukesha, said there's a difference between hearing about a serial killer and seeing firsthand where he actually stalked his victims.

"You look at it now and it's all these nice buildings," he said. "You really wouldn't think all these horrific things happened here."

ACROSS THE NATION

Police: 14 hurt in shooting at Tempe, Ariz., club

TEMPE, Ariz. (AP)—Police made one arrest and were looking for two other suspects after a shootout amid a large crowd outside an Arizona nightclub left more than a dozen people wounded and set off a chaotic scene as the injured screamed for help and hundreds tried to flee. The number of people confirmed wounded in the shooting late Friday in the Phoenix suburb of Tempe rose to 14 after a person went to a hospital Saturday with a gunshot wound to the foot, police spokesman Lt. Mike Horn said. None of the wounded had life-threatening injuries. Twelve of them had relatively minor injuries, some driving themselves to hospitals, while two were seriously hurt.

Convicted killer got unemployment while in LA jail

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Authorities say a convicted killer who gained notoriety for having a murder scene tattooed on his chest received unemployment benefits while he was in jail. Sheriff's Capt. Mike Parker said Saturday that Anthony Garcia, nicknamed "Chopper," received more than \$30,000 in fraudulent unemployment while in Los Angeles County jail from 2008 to 2010. Parker says Garcia's father and two girlfriends would get the checks then cash them and deposit the money in the inmate accounts of Garcia and fellow gang members.

4 straight: Romney wins Washington GOP caucus

WASHINGTON (AP)—Mitt Romney rolled to a double-digit victory in Washington state's Republican presidential caucuses Saturday night, his fourth campaign triumph in a row and a fresh show of strength in the run-up to 10 Super Tuesday contests in all regions of the country.

Rick Santorum and Ron Paul battled for second place, while Newt Gingrich ran a distant fourth.

Claiming his victory, Romney said in a statement that the win meant Washington state's voters "do not want a Washington insider in the White House. They want a conservative businessman who understands the private sector and knows how to get the federal government out of the way so that the economy can once again grow vigorously."

Romney's West Coast victory came on the heels of twin primary triumphs over Santorum earlier in the week in hard-fought Michigan and lightly contested Arizona, as well as a narrow win over Paul in Maine caucuses earlier in February.

Returns from caucuses in 60

percent of Washington state's precincts showed Romney with 37 percent of the vote, while Paul and Santorum each had 24 percent. Gingrich was drawing 11 percent.

Romney's win was worth 30 of the 40 delegates at stake. Paul and Santorum each won five.

That brought Romney's overall total to 203 delegates, according to an Associated Press count that includes party officials who will vote on the selection of a nominee but are not selected at primaries or caucuses. Santorum had 92, Gingrich 33 and Paul 25. It takes 1,144 delegates to win the nomination at the Republican National Convention this summer in Tampa and challenge President Barack Obama in the fall.

The Republican race has shared the political spotlight in the past few days with a controversy in which conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh called a Georgetown University law student a "slut" and a "prostitute"—an issue that the GOP presidential rivals seemed reluctant to comment on.

Limbaugh apologized on

his website during the evening to the woman, Sandra Fluke, who had spoken out publicly in favor of a requirement for most insurance coverage to include contraception.

Romney, Santorum and Gingrich were all campaigning in Ohio—the most intensely contested of the Super Tuesday states—as the first caucus returns were reported.

Romney criticized Obama after a woman attending a campaign rally in Beavercreek said she had a daughter stationed in Afghanistan who believes the U.S. mission there is unclear. The woman asked when Romney would bring the troops home.

"If your daughter is not familiar with the mission that she's on, how in the world can the commander in chief sleep at night, knowing that we have soldiers in harm's way that don't know exactly, precisely, what it is that they're doing there," the former Massachusetts governor said.

He said he'd bring troops home "as soon as humanly possible—as soon as that mission is complete."

Asia

China to up defense spending by 11.2 pct in 2012



Chinese military officers arrive for a meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, Sunday, March 4, 2012. AP

BEIJING (AP)—China said Sunday that it would boost its defense spending by 11.2 percent in 2012, the latest in a nearly two-decade string of double-digit increases.

Although the planned figure is less than last year's 12.7 percent increase, China's military leaders have said they are unhappy with recent moves by the Obama administration to increase the U.S. military presence in the Asia-Pacific region. Only twice since the early 1990s has the increase been less than double digits.

National People's Congress spokesman, Li Zhaoxing, said China's defense spending would increase by 11.2 percent over actual spending last year to hit 670.2 billion yuan (\$106.4 billion) in 2012, an increase of about 67 billion yuan.

China's official defense spending is the largest in the world after the United States, but actual

spending, according to foreign defense experts, may be 50 percent higher, as China excludes outlays for its nuclear missile force and other programs.

Li, speaking at a news conference a day before the opening of the annual session of the congress, said China's military spending was small as a percentage of gross domestic product compared to other countries, especially the United States.

"China is committed to the path of peaceful development and follows a national defense policy that is defensive in nature," Li said. "You see, China has 1.3 billion people, a large territory and long coastline, but our defense spending is relatively low compared with other major countries."

Last year's military spending amounted to 1.28 percent of China's economy, Li said. By contrast, the ratio stood at 4.8 percent for the U.S. in 2010, ac-

cording to the World Bank.

Beijing has mounted a robust defense buildup for more than two decades that has transformed the military into a formidable regional force, increasingly able to project power far from China. While chiefly aimed at the U.S., the buildup is also jangling nerves among Asian rival India and neighbors Japan, Vietnam and the Philippines, which have maritime disputes with China.

Mindful of the unease the burgeoning military has created among its neighbors and the opportunity it has given the United States to raise its profile in the region, Li repeated several times that China's intentions are peaceful and defensive.

"China's limited military strength is aimed at safeguarding sovereignty, national security and territorial integrity and will not pose a threat to other countries," he said.

NKorea's Kim orders high alert during DMZ visit

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered troops along the heavily armed border with rival South Korea to be on high alert during a visit to the Demilitarized Zone, state media reported Sunday.

Kim's visit to Panmunjom village, his first reported trip there since the December death of his father, Kim Jong Il, comes amid escalating militaristic rhetoric aimed at U.S. ally South Korea just days after Washington and Pyongyang agreed to a nuclear deal after years of deadlock.

Recent North Korean threats, including vows of a "sacred war" against Seoul over U.S.-South Korean military drills, appear to be aimed at a domestic audience, analysts say, and could be an effort to bolster

Kim Jong Un's credentials as a military leader after showing off his diplomatic skills on the U.S. nuclear deal.

Still, the rhetoric keeps the region on edge and complicates diplomatic efforts to settle the standoff over North Korea's nuclear weapons program. North Korea has acted on its threats in the past. Violence in 2010 killed 50 South Koreans and led to fears of a broader conflict.

On Sunday, tens of thousands of North Koreans rallied in Pyongyang, vowing to topple South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, who ended a no-strings-attached aid policy to the North when he took power in 2008, instead linking assistance to nuclear disarmament.

In rhetoric typical from the North, military chief Ri Yong

Ho warned in a speech at Pyongyang's main Kim Il Sung Square that the North Korean army would "sweep out" the South Korean traitors using their guns.

A crowd of soldiers and citizens later paraded through the plaza, pumping their fists and chanting, "Let's kill Lee Myung-bak by tearing him to pieces."

The threats are aimed internally as Kim Jong Un bolsters his power among the elite and military as the third generation of his family to lead the country, said Jeung Young-tae, an analyst with the Korea Institute for National Unification in Seoul.

"It's something that Kim Jong Un must do as the successor," Jeung said Sunday. "The North did a similar thing when Kim Jong Il appeared as the

With the huge outlays, the Chinese military's armory include the home-built J-10 jet fighter, new nuclear submarines and modern surface vessels armed with supersonic anti-ship missiles. Last year, China began testing a new J-20 stealth fighter and launched sea trials of its first aircraft carrier, a refurbished hulk purchased from Ukraine. Cyber-warfare programs are also burgeoning.

While Beijing insists its military is defensive and is not a threat, defense analysts say the new capabilities are aimed at keeping foreign forces, especially the U.S., out of the seas and air space around China. The South China Sea has become a new potential flash point, with Beijing's more powerful navy and an assertive policy to defend contested claims to groups of islands, reefs and atolls, and the U.S. has declared its own interest in making sure sea lanes remain open.

new leader" in 1994 following the death of his father, North Korea founder Kim Il Sung.

North Korea accuses the U.S. and South Korea of holding the joint military drills as preparation for a northward invasion. The allies' military exercises began last week and are scheduled to end in April.

During his Panmunjom visit, Kim Jong Un told troops to "maintain the maximum alertness as they are standing in confrontation with the enemies at all times," according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

On Saturday, a spokesman for North Korea's National Defense Commission told a news conference that the United States must halt the joint military drills if it is serious about peace on the Korean peninsula.

Conflicting accounts over Afghan Quran burnings

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An investigation into the burning of Muslim holy books at a U.S. military base has found it was a mistake involving at least five Americans who may face a disciplinary review, a Western official said Saturday, but Afghan investigators claimed it was an intentional desecration.

The conflicting accounts highlight rising tensions between the two countries despite apologies by President Barack Obama and other U.S. officials following the Feb. 20 discovery of charred Qurans and other religious literature in a burn pit at Bagram air base, north of Kabul.

Anger over the burnings already has led the deaths of more than 30 Afghans during violent protests as well as six U.S. soldiers who were shot and killed by rogue Afghan security forces.

A Western official told The Associated Press that preliminary findings from a joint investigation by senior Afghan and U.S. military officials that was ordered by Marine Gen. John Allen has convinced them that although mistakes were made, there was no intent to desecrate the Qurans or other material.

The official, who has knowledge of the investigation but spoke on condition of ano-

nymity because of the sensitivity of the case, said it could lead to a disciplinary review of at least five U.S. military personnel involved. The official did not elaborate, and it was unclear what such a review could recommend.

The controversy began when Qurans and other Islamic texts were removed from the library at the Parwan Detention Facility, then taken to the burn pit at the adjoining Bagram Air Field.

The Western official confirmed earlier reports that extremist inscriptions were found inside the texts, including notations apparently scribbled by detainees exchanging messages. He said that after the writings were discovered, two Afghan-American interpreters were assigned to go through the library materials, and 1,652 items were removed and placed in boxes.

A decision was made to dispose of the material because of a lack of storage space and the notes inside, but a group of three soldiers on a garbage detail removed the books before that could be done properly, the official said. He said the soldiers had no idea what they were throwing into the burn pit and insisted none of the material was destroyed before it was removed by Afghan workers.

As Myanmar thaws, decades-old civil war festers on

TSINYU MOUNTAIN, Myanmar (AP)—The seasoned guerrilla officer surveys the battlefield from his do-or-die mountaintop defenses: to the front, visible through the haze, a town torched and brutalized by Myanmar government troops. To his rear, the stronghold of the country's most potent insurgency, one of several ethnic rebellions that erupted more than 60 years ago.

As a hopeful world cheers surprising democratic moves by the military-backed government and weighs the lifting of economic sanctions, the rebels of Kachin state still are fighting for the freedoms that were promised them in 1947, as the country then called Burma was breaking free of the British Empire.

Elsewhere in the country, the government has negotiated fragile cease-fires with rebel groups, leaving Kachin State as home to the last full-blown rebellion. Here, hostilities erupted anew last year and have driven at least 60,000 from their homes in an escalating refugee crisis. Killings, torture and rapes by government troops also persist,

as do sporadic clashes, according to human rights groups.

Peace with the ethnic minorities who make up 40 percent of the population is widely seen as crucial if Myanmar is to emerge from iron-fisted rule, underdevelopment, sanctions and diplomatic isolation. Continued violence against minorities also would make it difficult for the U.S. and other Western nations to lift their sanctions against Myanmar.

The ethnic jumble is further complicated by geography—the Kachin sit on rich natural resources and are wedged between China and India. They also say they are struggling to preserve a unique culture and Christian religion against a central government bent on eradicating their identity and quest for autonomy.

The Shan, Karen, Chin and other minorities, inhabitants of resource-rich border regions, share similar views.

As the latest bout of fighting enters its 10th month, the Kachin and northern Shan states are a patchwork of government, insurgent and contested areas.

World

Fresh assault on Homs as Red Cross seeks access

BEIRUT (AP)—Syrian forces launched a fresh assault on Homs on Saturday as the Red Cross pressed forward with efforts to deliver badly needed aid to thousands of people stranded in a besieged neighborhood despite warnings from regime troops of land mines and booby traps.

Two days after they fought their way into the rebel stronghold of Baba Amr, government forces shelled several other neighborhoods of the city, the country's third largest with about 1 million people. They included districts where many of Baba Amr's residents had fled, activists said.

The Syrian regime has said it was fighting "armed gangs" in Baba Amr, which has become a symbol of the nearly year-old uprising against President Bashar Assad's authoritarian rule. The revolt has killed more than 7,500 people, according to the U.N.

■■■
DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)—The bodies of two foreign journalists who were killed in shelling while trapped inside a besieged district in the central Syrian city of Homs have left Syria late Saturday on board a French plane to Paris, the Polish Foreign Ministry said.



A man sits next to the bodies of a three Free Syrian Army fighters allegedly killed by the Syrian Army during their funeral in Idlib, north Syria, Saturday, March 3, 2012.

Earlier Saturday, Syrian Red Crescent officials handed over the bodies to embassy officials. French Ambassador Eric Chevallier received the body of French photographer Remi Ochlik, and a Polish diplomat received the remains of American Marie Colvin. U.S. interests in Syria are represented by Poland after the U.S. closed its embassy

in Damascus last month.

■■■
The Local Coordination Committees activist network said mortars slammed into the districts of Khaldiyeh, Bab Sbaa and Khader.

Abu Hassan al-Homsi, a doctor at a makeshift clinic in Khaldiyeh, said he treated a dozen people who were wounded, most lightly.

"This has become routine, the mortars start falling early in the morning," he said. Several homes were damaged from the morning shelling.

Another Khaldiyeh resident who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals said the district has been without water and heating fuel for a week amid freezing temperatures and snow.

"We are collecting rain and snow water, and cutting trees to burn to warm ourselves," he said.

Conditions in Baba Amr are believed to be dire, with extended power outages, shortages of food and water, and lack of medical care. Syrian government forces took control of the neighborhood Thursday after rebels fled the district under constant bombardment that activists said killed hundreds of people since early February.

The Red Cross said the regime blocked its entry to Baba Amr on Friday, one day after the group

received government permission to enter with a convoy of seven trucks carrying 15 tons of humanitarian aid including food, medical supplies and blankets.

"We are still in negotiations to enter Baba Amr," ICRC spokesman Hicham Hassan said Saturday in Geneva.

The Syrians said they were not letting the Red Cross into Baba Amr because of safety concerns, including land mines, Hassan said, adding the organization had not been able to verify the danger. The government has not offered an official explanation.

Iranian opposition group eyes Jordan relocation

PARIS (AP)—An exiled Iranian opposition group being forced to relocate from its paramilitary base in eastern Iraq proposed on Saturday to temporarily move to the Jordanian border instead of Camp Liberty near Baghdad.

Last month, the Obama administration offered to move the group temporarily to Camp Liberty, which once was a base for U.S. soldiers.

Iraq wants Camp Ashraf, with more than 3,000 residents, shut down. The Mujahedeen-e-Khalq, or MEK, guerrilla group was disarmed by U.S. soldiers during the Iraq invasion in 2003, and have since become an irritant to Iraq's Shiite-led government, which is trying to bolster ties with its Shiite-ruled neighbor.

The group, whose political wing is based outside Paris, is seeking removal from the U.S. list of terrorist organizations and in February U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton suggested that one way to get off it was to cooperate in a relocation plan.

She said the United States will help ensure the safety and security of the Camp Ashraf residents, near the Iraq-Iran border, as they are moved to another site—Camp Liberty.

The MEK members fear a massacre if they remain at Camp Ashraf. An Iraqi raid last year left 34 exiles dead.

However, the group insisted in its statement Saturday that "mini-

mum assurances" must be met such as removal of Iraqi guards from seven positions in Camp Liberty where women would reside for a relocation to take place. Among other assurances sought are access to medical services, freedom of movement and transfer of vehicles and other moveable property.

So far, "none of the minimum assurances that Ashraf residents had sought has been met," the statement said. It claimed those living there have two options: "massacre and death at Ashraf or gradual death in a place called Liberty, under the name and supervision of the U.N."

Already, 397 Camp Ashraf residents have relocated to Camp Liberty.

Maryam Rajavi, co-leader of the MEK, said that camp residents are ready to relocate temporarily to the Jordanian border this month in an area once set up as a tent city to house asylum seekers after the outbreak of the Iraq war in 2003.

The MEK said the relocation would have to take place under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UNHCR refugee agency.

"As such there will be no need for (the) Liberty detention center and the chain of problems and difficulties," the statement said, adding that residents would not leave the premises until acceptance for resettlement in third countries.

Muslim Brotherhood forms political party in Libya

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP)—The Muslim Brotherhood in Libya announced on Saturday that it has formed a political party after six decades in the shadows of dictator Moammar Gadhafi's regime.

The Islamist group declared the creation of the Justice and Development Party in the absence of laws laying out a formal process for the establishment of political parties.

The Brotherhood's spokesman, Mohamed Gaair, said the group has representation in more than 18 cities across the country, and that more than 1,400 members attended Friday's meeting in Tripoli to declare the formation of the political party.

They chose as party leader Mohamed Sowan, a native of the city of Misrata, which saw

some of the worst fighting in the civil war that brought down Gadhafi and has since become distrustful of authority based elsewhere in the country.

Sowan worked as a hotel manager and was a political prisoner under the Gadhafi regime for eight years until 2006.

Gaair said that the Brotherhood has had a presence in Libya since 1949, but that many of its leaders were jailed under Gadhafi or exiled.

Several prominent former rebel leaders fighting to oust Gadhafi were associated with the movement, but the group does not have any officials in the transitional government.

Now, the Brotherhood is considered the most organized movement in Libya to have nationwide support. Supporters include wealthy businessmen

who returned to the country after last year's civil war ended, opening up civil society groups and charitable funds throughout the war-ravaged country.

Gaair said the group aims to establish a just and developed society based on religious values.

"Our first main goal is to work on security and stability," he said. "We are still a new founded party, but we will work on the basis of Islamic principles and that doesn't mean the shallow meaning of religion most people think of like banning women from leaving home. This is not rational."

In October, Libya's Western-backed rulers said that Islamic law would be the main source of legislation.

The influence of the Brotherhood and related Islamist

groups has surged following last year's Arab Spring uprisings. In Egypt, where the movement was founded in 1928, its affiliated political party has taken around half the seats in parliament.

Elections have swayed heavily in favor of Islamic movements in Tunisia and Morocco, as well. They are key to the opposition in Yemen and are playing a role in Syria's uprising. The Brotherhood's offshoot, Hamas, rules the Gaza Strip. Their political arm in Jordan, the Islamic Action Front, is the country's largest opposition group.

The pan-Arab Muslim Brotherhood, though, is not unified in its interpretation of Islamic law nor in how it should be applied. The groups also have separate funding mechanisms.

WORLD BRIEFS

2 trains collide in Poland; 8 dead, dozens injured

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—Two trains collided head-on in southern Poland late Saturday, killing at least eight people and injuring around 50 in what appears to be one of the worst rail disasters in the country in recent years, officials said. Both trains were traveling on the same track but toward each other and collided head-on, Andrzej Pawlowski,

a member of the board of the state railway company PKP, said in an interview on the all-news station TVN24. He said one of the trains, which was traveling south from Warsaw to Krakow, should not have been on the track. The other train, headed from the eastern city of Przemyśl to Warsaw, was on the correct track, Pawlowski said. It wasn't immediately clear how the southbound train ended up on the wrong track.

Maintenance work was being carried out on one of the tracks where the collision occurred, in the small town of Szczekociny.

Egypt court rejects second Mickey cartoon lawsuit

CAIRO (AP)—An Egyptian court on Saturday rejected the second of two lawsuits brought by ultraconservative Islamists accusing a Christian media mogul of insulting Islam when

he relayed a cartoon online of Mickey Mouse with a beard and Minnie in a face veil. The judge ruled the plaintiff was not eligible to file the religious defamation lawsuit and sent the case back to the state prosecutor's office for further investigation. The first lawsuit against Sawiris was thrown out by a different court earlier this week on similar grounds. Businessman Naguib Sawiris Saturday used his Twitter account—the

same way he spread the original images—to express relief. "I thank God for this ruling because I feel that there is still hope," he wrote. "Congratulations to an open, free and smiling Egypt that respects all religions."

Report: 10 dead in ethnic clashes in Burkina Faso

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP)—Ethnic clashes in

a southern village of Burkina Faso have left at least 10 people dead, in a dispute over which community has the right to appoint a local chief, state radio reported Saturday. The report said the violence between the Liliou and the Akonga communities was sparked by a disagreement over the chieftaincy of the village of Guenon, located more than 80 miles (130 kilometers) south of the capital, Ouagadougou.

Focus

NEW YORK (AP)—Boomers beware: Scams, frauds and other financial exploitation schemes targeting older Americans are a growing multibillion-dollar industry enriching the schemers, anguishing the victims and vexing law enforcement officials who find these crimes among the hardest to investigate and prosecute.

“The true con artists, who are in the business of making money off older folks through devious means, are very good at what they do,” said Sally Hurme, a consumer fraud specialist with AARP. “They cover their tracks, they use persuasive psychological means to spin their tales.”

Elder financial abuse encompasses a wide range of tactics, some perpetrated by relatives or trusted advisers, some by strangers via telemarketing and Internet-based scams.

Researchers say only a fraction of the abuse gets reported to the authorities, often because victims are too befuddled or embarrassed to speak up. Even with the reported cases, data is elusive because most federal crime statistics don’t include breakdowns of victims’ ages.

Nonetheless, there’s ample research to convey the scope of this scourge.

A federally funded study conducted for the National Institute of Justice in 2009 concluded that 5 percent of Americans 60 and older had been the victim of recent financial exploitation by a family member, while 6.5 percent were the target of a nonfamily member. The study, led by psychologist Ron Acerno of the Medical University of South Carolina, was based on input from 5,777 older adults.

A report last year by insurer MetLife Inc. estimated the annual loss by victims of elder financial abuse at \$2.9 billion, compared with \$2.6 billion in 2008.

“Elder financial abuse is an intolerable crime resulting in losses of human rights and dignity,” MetLife said. “Yet it remains underreported, underrecognized and underprosecuted.”

Older Americans are by no means the only target of schemers and scammers, but experts say they have distinctive characteristics that often make them a tempting prey.

Some have disabilities that leave them dependent on others for help; others are unsophisticated about certain financial matters or potential pitfalls on the Internet. Many are relatively isolated and susceptible to overtures from seemingly friendly strangers.

“That’s why telemarketing scams are so successful,” said Karen Turner, head of a newly formed elder fraud unit in the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office in New York City. “They’re delighted to have someone to talk with—they almost welcome the calls.”

Coupled with these factors, most older Americans, even in these troubled economic times, have tangible assets in the form of homeownership, pensions and Social Security income that scammers seek to exploit.

Another factor is the older generation’s patriotism and respect for authority, according to Sid Kirchheimer, who writes a weekly “Scam Alert” column for the AARP Bulletin.

“A lot of the scammers pretend to be with the government—they say they’re calling from the Social Security Administration or the IRS,” Kirchheimer said. “People 65 and over, they often fall for that.”



In this Wednesday, March 2, 2011 file photo, entertainer Mickey Rooney testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington about elder abuse before the Senate Aging Committee.

Losses mount from scams targeting older Americans

There’s a multitude of scam scenarios, some of them new twists on old plays.

Among the current variations:

■ **The Grandparent Scam:** Impostors, often calling from abroad, pose as a grandchild in need of cash to cope with some sort of emergency, perhaps an arrest or an accident. The grandparent is asked to send money and urged not to tell anyone else about the transfer.

Police in Bangor, Maine, said a man in his 70s was bilked out of \$7,000 in January by a con artist pretending to be his grandson who called to say he needed money to get out of jail in Spain.

In another version, scammers pose as soldiers who’ve been serving in Afghanistan, and call grandparents claiming to need money as part of their homecoming.

■ **The Lottery Scam:** Scammers inform their target that they have won a lottery or sweepstakes and need to make a payment to obtain the supposed prize. The targets may be sent a fake prize-money check they can deposit in their bank account. Before that check bounces, the criminals will collect money for supposed fees or taxes on the prize.

Police in Holden, Mass., say an 80-year-old woman recently was bilked out of \$400,000 over the course of a year in her efforts to claim bogus prize money. In Los Angeles, authorities said last year that an 87-year-old widower fell for a lottery scam masterminded in Quebec, and mailed \$160,000 in checks that

he’d been told was for taxes on his purported \$3.3 million in winnings.

Many recent lottery scam calls have come from Jamaica, to the point where its area code (876) is now cited as by anti-scam experts as a warning sign. Other Caribbean area codes also have been implicated.

■ **The Toilet Paper Scam:** Fraudsters often try to convince gullible targets into paying exorbitant sums for unneeded products and services, as exemplified by a scam uncovered in South Florida last year.

According to U.S. investigators, salespeople claiming their company was affiliated with federal agencies told their elderly victims that they needed special toilet paper to comply with new regulations and avoid ruining their septic tanks. In all, prosecutors said the company scammed about \$1 million from victims from across the country, including some who purchased more than 70 years’ worth of toilet paper.

Three suspects in that case, all from Florida’s Palm Beach County, pleaded guilty to wire fraud. But officials say arrests are the exception, not the rule, especially in telemarketing and Internet scams where there’s no paper trail, no face-to-face interaction and the perpetrators are often operating from abroad.

“It’s very hard for us to investigate overseas—the likelihood of us finding them and extraditing them is slim,” said Turner, the Brooklyn prosecutor.

Paul Greenwood, a deputy district attorney in San Diego who runs an elder abuse prosecution unit, says he’s been trying cajole local banks and

credit unions to be more aggressive in protecting their elderly customers. One way is for those institutions to contact authorities if they detect suspicious withdrawal patterns.

Greenwood says he’s often spoken by phone with overseas scammers, initially pretending to be a potential victim, then revealing who he is.

“They’re not in the least affected. They just move on to the next call,” he said. “If they’re outside the U.S., they’re home free.”

Nonetheless, Greenwood hopes his fellow prosecutors nationwide will become more aggressive in pursuing charges when they can catch a suspected scammer.

“The cliché is that these are victims with poor memories or who are reluctant to testify,” Greenwood said. “We’ve found we can overcome that. Once you get them into court, the victims have such strong jury appeal that most of time the defense just pleads out.”

Cases of financial elder abuse surface at all levels of U.S. society.

For example, Anthony Marshall, the son of multimillionaire philanthropist Brooke Astor, was found guilty in 2009 of exploiting his mother’s dementia to help himself to millions of dollars. He’s free pending appeal.

Mickey Rooney, the 91-year-old actor, is suing his stepson and others on allegations that they tricked him into thinking he was on the brink of poverty while defrauding him out of millions and bullying him into continuing to work. The case is pending in Los Angeles Superior Court.

“I felt trapped, scared, used and frustrated,” Rooney told a special Senate committee considering abuse-prevention legislation last year. “But above all, when a man feels helpless, it’s terrible.”

For elderly scam victims of modest means, the results can be catastrophic.

“The abuse can leave a person devastated,” Turner said. “They’re not young enough to grow a nest egg again—the nest egg is gone.”

Even small-scale scams can have long-lasting impact.

Now in her mid-80s, Eunice Langa of New York’s Dutchess County still remembers a phone call some 20 years ago telling her she’d won a free cruise.

Delighted at the chance to give her brother and his wife the cruise as a gift, Langa agreed to mail off more than \$100 in fees to claim the prize, only to learn later she was victim of a scam.

“I just took them at their word,” she said. “There was no such thing and no way of tracking it.”

Since then, Langa, who has a master’s degree and work experience in broadcasting, teaching and public relations, has updated herself on potential exploitation and how to avoid it. Among other programs, she participated in two workshops developed by the National Council on Aging to help older adults learn how to budget their money, find benefits and avoid scams.

Her advice to others: “Don’t get excited with an offer and jump into anything without thoroughly investigating first.”

For prosecutors and other anti-scam experts, the most wrenching cases often involve financial abuse by an older person’s adult children or other family members who’d been put in positions of trust.

“These people think they’re entitled to something—they say, ‘I just wanted an advance on my inheritance,’” said Arlene Markarian, an assistant district attorney in Brooklyn who specializes in elder abuse prevention.

She says this type of financial exploitation is often accompanied by physical abuse, and yet many elderly victims balk at reporting it.

“There’s the embarrassment factor—no one wants to see relatives prosecuted,” Markarian said. “And there’s fear of losing your independence—being put in a nursing home. A lot of the times, it’s the offender making that threat.”

Markarian added another note of caution.

“We’re seeing not just older victims but older perpetrators,” she said. “Not all old people are sweet.”

A case in point: The estranged father of actress Jodie Foster—89-year-old Lucius Foster—was sentenced to a five-year jail term in December for bilking more than \$100,000 from poor and elderly people in a home-building scheme.

Financial abuse by family members and trusted advisers will be among the targets of the federal Office of Older Americans, part of the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Plans are

See **LOSSES** on Next Page

Health & Fitness

Still hungry? Have a 'second breakfast'

NEW YORK (AP)—Sometimes one breakfast isn't enough. So why not sneak in a second or a third?

On-the-go Americans increasingly are consuming their morning calories over several hours instead of sitting down to devour a plate of pancakes, bacon and eggs in one sitting. The case of the morning munchies is being fueled by the belief that it's healthier to eat several smaller meals in-

stead of three squares a day.

What qualifies as a snack or a meal is a matter of perspective, of course. But food companies are rolling out smaller bites that feed the growing appetite for morning treats.

General Mills, Quaker Oats and others are adding to their lineup of breakfast bars and yogurts. Sara Lee's Jimmy Dean this summer introduced mini-breakfast sandwiches. And fast-food chains like McDonald's

in recent years have expanded their breakfast menus to include morning snacks like smoothies and a fruit-and-walnut pack.

"It's breakfast in stages," says Liz Sloan, president of Sloan Trends, a food industry consulting group. "They'll eat something at home, then stop at Starbucks or a convenience store for coffee and maybe a little snack."

The deconstruction of breakfast is happening as more Americans eat their meals outside of

the home. After all, it's easier and less time-consuming to pop a few snacks in your purse or backpack for later rather than to sit down for a prepared meal.

The number of times Americans snack is expected to rise faster in the morning than during the afternoon or evening between 2008 and 2018, according to the market researcher The NPD Group.

Turning the snacking habit into an all-day affair would be a major growth driver for the already massive snack food industry. Sales of all snack foods reached \$16.64 billion in the past year, up 3.3 percent from a year ago, according to Nielsen.

Of course, food companies have tried before to get people to eat outside of typical meal times. For instance, Taco Bell launched the "Fourthmeal" ad campaign in 2006 to tap into customers' late-night cravings with menu items such as the 980-calorie "Volcano Nachos."

Marketing morning snacks is trickier, though. That's because people generally feel they should eat healthy in the mornings to start the day off right, and snacking is generally associated with junk food.

So to make the idea of tearing into a snack before noon easier to swallow, food companies are touting nutritional benefits of their packaged goodies. That means products that are

less than 300 calories and have more fiber, whole grains or antioxidants. The idea is that such snacks will help people stay energized or feel full longer.

That healthy halo is important for Monalisa Paredes, who eats several smaller meals throughout the day to control her weight. She starts out with a handful of almonds on the way to work. Once at the office, she nukes a bowl of instant oatmeal. Then she has a cup of yogurt a few hours later.

"I don't really feel like I eat breakfast anymore," says the 27-year-old New York City resident who works in communications. "It's just a bunch of snacks and then dinner."

There's no definitive ruling on whether spreading calories over multiple smaller meals is better than three square meals a day. But experts say all the extra snacking throughout the day could lead to expanding waistlines.

David Levitsky, a professor of nutrition and psychology at Cornell University, says the problem is that people often wind up consuming more calories when they switch to eating smaller meals throughout the day.

"If you reduce everything, that's fine. But that's not what we do," Levitsky says. "When you add in snacks, you're usually just adding calories."

Food companies nevertheless are betting on Americans' willing-

ness to take their snacking habit into the morning hours. Kraft this month is launching an advertising campaign for its MilkBite granola bars, which the company says provide the same amount of calcium as a glass of milk.

General Mills introduced its 140-calorie Fiber One bars in just two flavors in 2007. Since then, the company has introduced three new flavors as well as 90-calorie versions of the bars. Last year, the company added a Fiber One brownie.

Additionally, General Mills rolled out Yoplait Greek yogurts multipacks a year ago in honey vanilla and strawberry, coconut and cherry pomegranate were added this fall. The company says the Greek yogurts have twice the amount of protein as regular yogurt and offers "a great, convenient snack to help satisfy midmorning hunger."

Quaker Oat's "Real Medley" instant oatmeal cups with fruit and nuts will hit shelves in March. And earlier this year, Quaker Oats began selling a soft-baked banana nut bar that it says combines "the taste of your favorite baked goods with healthy ingredients." The bar has 140 calories, 5 grams of fiber and 6 grams of protein.

"If you have a lull at 10 a.m., it's going to help you get through to lunch," says Candace Mueller Medina, a spokeswoman for Quaker Oats, which is owned by PepsiCo. "It's a perfect midmorning snack for people who crave something sweet before lunch."



This undated photo provided by Quaker Oats, shows a package of Quaker Banana Nut Bread flavor, soft baked bars.

Study: Tai chi helps ease symptoms of Parkinson's

NEW YORK (AP)—The ancient Chinese exercise of tai chi improved balance and lowered the risk of falls in a study of people with Parkinson's disease.

Symptoms of the brain disorder include tremors and stiff, jerky movements that can affect walking and other activities. Medications and surgery can help, and doctors often recommend exercise or physical therapy.

Tai chi (ty-CHEE'), with its slow, graceful movements, has been shown to improve strength and aid stability in older people, and has been studied for a number of ailments. In the latest study, led by Fuzhong Li of the Oregon Research Institute in Eugene, tai chi was tested in 195 people with mild-to-moderate Parkinson's.

The participants attended twice-weekly group classes of either tai chi or two other kinds of exercise—stretching and resistance training, which includ-

ed steps and lunges with ankle weights and a weighted vest.

The tai chi routine was tailored for the Parkinson's patients, with a focus on "swing and sway" motions and weight-shifting, said Li, who practices tai chi and teaches instructors.

After six months of classes, the tai chi group did significantly better than the stretching group in tests of balance, control, walking and other measures. Compared with resistance training, the tai chi group did better in balance, control and stride, and about the same in other tests.

Tai chi training was better than stretching in reducing falls, and as effective as resistance training, the researchers reported. The improvements in the tai chi group continued during three months of follow-up.

Li said the study showed tai chi was safe. It's easy to learn, and there's no special equipment, he added.

"People are looking for alter-

native programs, and this could be one of them," he said.

Estimates vary, but at least 500,000 people in the United States have Parkinson's.

The findings are in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine. The study was paid for by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

Dr. Chenchen Wang, who is studying tai chi for arthritis and fibromyalgia, said the results of the Parkinson's research were "dramatic and impressive." She heads the Center for Complementary and Integrative Medicine at Tufts Medical Center in Boston.

One of the study's strengths: Researchers could measure the results directly instead of relying on the patients' own reports, she said. But a placebo effect can't be totally discounted, she said, since the participants knew which exercise program they were assigned and that could have influenced results.

LOSSES

From Page 17

in the works to provide guidelines for relatives and others on ethical standards for helping handle an older person's finances.

The Office of Older Americans is headed by Hubert H. Humphrey III, a former attorney general of Minnesota who says awareness of elder abuse is growing among law enforcement agencies and among citizens he's been meeting with in recent months.

"You ask if there's someone in audience who had something like this happen, someone will stand up and have the courage to tell their story, and you'll see others nodding their heads in recognition," Humphrey said. "It's out there—and people are beginning to have a greater confidence to speak out about it."

One of the policy advisers working with Humphrey is Naomi Karp, who formerly handled elder-abuse issues for AARP.

She said most states have developed appropriate laws for dealing with elder abuse, and the key question is whether there are enough investigators and other resources to carry them out effectively.

She likened the challenge to a whack-a-mole game.

"As soon as law enforcement or regulatory agencies go after one scam, it's so easy for the con artist to morph with the next best one," she said.

One needed step, according to abuse-prevention advocates, is getting money for the federal Elder Justice Act. It was passed by Congress two years ago with the aim of helping states combat various forms of elder abuse, but thus far no dollars have been appropriated to put it in practice.

The FBI is actively fighting elder financial abuse, issuing anti-scam top sheets and tracking the online portion of problem through its Internet Crime Complaint Center.

Special Agent Nick Savage said the center received more than 300,000 complaints last year, reflecting close to a half-billion dollars in losses, with 45 percent of the toll borne by people over 50.

Among older victims, Savage said, there's often a hesitancy to report the crimes.

"A lot of people are ashamed of the victimization and don't want to come forward for fear that they'll be seen silly, that they should have known better," he said.

Savage acknowledged that local law enforcement agen-

cies are sometimes reluctant to pursue scam investigations if the perpetrators are abroad. He said the FBI, with help from its foreign counterparts, can make headway in some instances, especially if it can establish a pattern that bundles a number of individual cases into one.

Looking ahead, there are mixed views on whether the baby boomers, now mostly in their 50s and early 60s, will be less prone to scams and exploitation than their elders.

The AARP's Hurme thinks that's possible.

"They're more assertive, questioning—certainly they've grown up on computers and are more savvy with them, so there is hope," Hurme said. "But I don't think the bad guys are going to go away—they're going to adjust their pitches as the demographics change."

Naomi Karp noted that many victims of securities fraud are well-educated men, not yet of retirement age, who overestimate their acumen, perhaps foretelling further problems as they age. She also noted that many boomers, no less so than their elders, will eventually experience cognitive declines that will increase their vulnerability.

"They may be boomers," she said. "But financial capacity is the often first kind to decline."

Life & Style

Smokey Robinson visits Duke Ellington students

WASHINGTON (AP)—Music legend Smokey Robinson reached out to a new generation of performing artists Friday, telling them they were starting out as he did: “with a love for doing something creative.”

Robinson, 72, visited Duke Ellington School of the Arts, named for the jazz great whose music Robinson said was the first he heard in his life because it was always playing in his Detroit home.

With students standing nearby, Robinson said any of them could follow him as a singing sensation, because “everybody starts with a love for doing something creative.”

“If you see somebody and they are 15 and you say ‘Oh, there’s a new artist.’ No, they’ve

been doing it since they were 6. Everybody starts with that love, so of course, some of these kids will do that,” Robinson said.

Robinson said he started singing the day he was born “according to my mom.” He sang in various bands in high school, including The Miracles. Just after high school, he connected with Berry Gordy, with whom he would later form the Motown label. The label’s first hit was Robinson’s “Shop Around.”

He went on to make hits such as “Cruisin’,” “You’ve Really Got a Hold On Me,” “Tracks of My Tears” and “Tears of A Clown.”

“I thank God for my life because as a baby when I was 3, and 4 and 5 years old I wanted to be a singer, but I grew up in



Singer Smokey Robinson speaks to students at Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, Friday, March 2, 2012. AP

Reba reveals painful past, lessons in OWN special

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—More than 20 years after a plane crash killed seven members of her band and her tour manager, Reba McEntire can still clearly see the hotel room she was in when she got the news.

The emotion comes flooding back when she revisits that tragic day in 1991 on “Oprah’s Master Class” on the OWN network Sunday night. It’s a rare break in composure from the queen of country music.

“I don’t guess it ever quits hurting,” she says on the show, recalling how she tearfully followed husband-manager Narvel Blackstock room to room as he called people to let them know. “It’s the worst thing that’s ever happened in my life.”

From that tragedy, she learned to make each day count and not to put anything off until tomorrow. However, McEntire said after the crash, she built up a wall so she would not get close to anybody, and it took time for her to open up to members of her touring family again. She accepted support from industry friends like Dolly Parton, who helped her put a new band together, and she took solace in her strong work ethic.

“I had a huge organization, and I needed to continue working, because that’s their paycheck also,” she told The Associated Press in a phone interview from just outside Dublin on Thursday. “I had to take care of the people who are still here. So it wasn’t a thing where I could quit. I had to go on with my life, my career for them, for my family, for my sanity.”

Hard work is a defining theme in McEntire’s life, and it has served her “tremendously” throughout her career. It’s something she learned early on from her father, Clark, when she was put to work as a kid on the family’s ranch in Oklahoma.

“If you do that in any job, if you can take direction, if you’re coachable, and you give it all, you’re going to be successful,” she said on the phone.

McEntire is now a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame and has sold more than 55 million albums worldwide. She also runs a successful fashion and merchandise line.

In 2001, she performed in the Broadway revival of “Annie Get Your Gun” and she starred in the hit TV show “Reba” for six seasons before it was taken off the air.



In this Sunday, Feb. 12, 2012, file photo, Reba McEntire speaks on stage during the 54th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. AP

the ‘hood in Detroit and I didn’t know if that was possible, so I am living my wildest childhood dream right now,” he said.

Robinson said he is working on a Christmas song and plans another in Spanish. Edward Ellington, son of Duke Ellington, said Robinson told him after they left the school that he is learning Spanish.

A news conference and appearance before a student assembly are part of the Ellington school’s 5-year-old Performance Series of Legends program.

Robinson also planned to perform on Saturday at a sold-out benefit concert for the school at the Kennedy Arts Center.

“I think it’s a shame that

many of our schools have had to cut our arts programs and especially the inner-city schools,” said Robinson.

Previous legends program artists who have given benefit concerts for the school are comedian David Chapelle, a Duke Ellington school alumnus; mezzo soprano Denyce Graves; singer/musician Stevie Wonder

and soul/funk band Earth, Wind and Fire.

Together they have raised \$2 million for the school, which is about 80 percent African American, 12 percent white and 6 percent Latino, said Rory Pultens, the school’s chief executive. It has an annual budget of about \$5.8 million.

Cornelius Williams, 17, was one of a handful of students who performed a song while Robinson waited to enter the news conference. He said he belongs to the school’s show choir, which has a “Smokey Robinson/Miracles-kind of group.”

“I feel like he definitely is an inspiration to me to keep doing what I’m doing, to keep learning,” Williams said.

Students shrieked and cheered when Robinson appeared onstage and the enthusiasm didn’t die down when he lectured them to make sure they didn’t neglect their other studies for their art or give in to peer pressure.

Robinson said he grew up in a house of 11 kids and was raised by his sister after his mother died. Some of his close friends were “gangsters,” he said. But he said he refused to join them, when they asked him to help rob a gas station.

Limbaugh apologizes to law student for insult

WASHINGTON (AP)—Conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh apologized Saturday to a Georgetown University law student he had branded a “slut” and “prostitute” after fellow Republicans as well as Democrats criticized him and several advertisers left his program.

The student, Sandra Fluke, had testified to congressional Democrats in support of their national health care policy that would compel her college to offer health plans that cover her birth control.

“My choice of words was not the best, and in the attempt to be humorous, I created a national stir,” Limbaugh said on his website. “I sincerely apologize to Ms. Fluke for the insulting word choices.”

Attempts to reach Fluke by telephone and e-mail were unsuccessful.

Fluke had been invited to testify to a House committee about her school’s health care plan that does not include contraception. Republican lawmakers barred her from testifying during that hearing, but Democrats invited her back and she spoke to the Democratic lawmakers at an unofficial session.

President Barack Obama, whose landmark health care overhaul requires many institutions to provide birth control coverage, telephoned her from the Oval Office on Friday to express his support.



In this Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010 photo provided by the Las Vegas News Bureau, radio talk-show host Rush Limbaugh, one of six judges for the pageant, speaks during a Miss America news conference at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas. AP

The issue has been much debated in the presidential race, with Republican candidates particularly criticizing the Obama plan’s requirements on such employers as Catholic hospitals. Democrats—and many Republican leaders, too—have suggested the issue could energize women to vote for Obama and other Democrats in November.

Limbaugh was not swayed by Fluke’s statements before the House panel.

He said on Wednesday, “What does it say about the college coed ... who goes before a congressional committee and essentially says that she must be paid to have sex? It makes her a slut, right? It makes her a

prostitute. She wants to be paid to have sex.”

He dug in a day later, refusing to give ground.

“If we’re going to have to pay for this, then we want something in return, Ms. Fluke,” Limbaugh said. “And that would be the videos of all this sex posted online so we can see what we’re getting for our money.”

He also asked the 30-year-old Fluke: “Who bought your condoms in junior high?”

And on Friday, still defiant even after Democrats beat back Republican challenges to the new health care law, Limbaugh scoffed at the Democrats’ talk of a conservative “war on women.”

“Amazingly, when there is the slightest bit of opposition to this new welfare entitlement being created, then all of a sudden we hate women. We want ‘em barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen,” he said. “And now, at the end of this week, I am the person that the women of America are to fear the most.”

By Saturday, six advertisers had pulled sponsorship of Limbaugh’s show and Republicans distanced themselves from the comments.

Republican Newt Gingrich said reporters were more excited to talk about Limbaugh’s language than Obama’s record.

“I think that’s a vastly bigger issue than anything a radio host says,” Gingrich told reporters in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Even so, Limbaugh decided to yield late Saturday.

“For over 20 years, I have illustrated the absurd with absurdity, three hours a day, five days a week,” Limbaugh said in his statement. “In this instance, I chose the wrong words in my analogy of the situation. I did not mean a personal attack on Ms. Fluke.”

But he also said the entire debate was “absolutely absurd.”

“In my monologue, I posited that it is not our business whatsoever to know what is going on in anyone’s bedroom, nor do I think it is a topic that should reach a presidential level,” he said.

Weinstein protests R rating of 'Bully' documentary

NEW YORK (AP)—Fresh off his Oscar glory with "The Artist," there's no silence for Harvey Weinstein when it comes to his next film.

The famously bellicose producer is protesting the R rating received by a documentary his Weinstein Co. is releasing. "Bully," directed by Lee Hirsch, is an examination of school bullying that follows five kids and families over the course of a school year.

It received the rating, which restricts kids under the age of 17 from seeing it without an accompanying adult, because of six expletives. Weinstein claims such a rating restricts the very audience the film can most benefit: high school teens.

The Weinstein Co. appealed the decision, but the Motion Picture Association of America, which oversees movie ratings, declined to lower the rating to a PG-13.

"I find it outrageous," says Weinstein, who has long been renowned for his combativeness. "This is, on a personal level because of my own temper, a redemptive act for me."

"We're hoping that smart people come to their senses," he adds.

Weinstein has threatened to withdraw his future films from the MPAA rating system. But John Fithian, president of the National Association of Theatre Owners, has reminded him that such a tactic would result in theaters treating un-

rated films as NC-17 movies, which can kill a film's artistic or commercial success.

"As a father of a 9-year-old child, I am personally grateful that (the Weinstein Co.) has addressed the important issue of bullying in such a powerful documentary," Fithian wrote in a letter to Weinstein. "Yet were the MPAA and NATO to waive the ratings rules whenever we believed that a particular movie had merit, or was somehow more important than other movies, we would no longer be neutral parties applying consistent standards, but

rather censors of content based on personal mores."

That leaves the makers of "Bully" with the question of whether to edit or bleep the expletives, which are part of the antagonistic behavior documented between kids in the film. Right now, Hirsch is declining to do that, and has the backing of Weinstein. The director says such editing would minimize the harsh realities of bullying.

"To cut around it or bleep it out, it really absolutely does lessen the impact and takes away from what the honest

moment was, and what a terrifying feeling it can be (to be bullied)," says Hirsch. "I feel a responsibility as a filmmaker, as the person entrusted to tell (these kids') stories, to not water them down."

Weinstein has feuded with the MPAA and NATO before, notably over the NC-17 rating of the 2010 drama "Blue Valentine" and the R given to the 2011 best picture winner "The King's Speech"—which was recut and briefly released again in a PG-13 version.

Some believe Weinstein is using this ratings squabble to help promote "Bully" ahead of its March 23 release. "This is not publicity," Weinstein counters. "This is ridiculous."

He claims there is precedent for degrading a film's rating when it serves a greater good. Though the 2004 documentary "Gunner Palace" contains dozens of expletives, its R rating was changed to PG-13 on appeal because of its worthy subject matter: the experiences and stories of American soldiers in

Baghdad during the Iraq War.

Joan Graves, head of the Classification and Ratings Administration for the MPAA, calls that decision "an anomaly" made in "a different time and a different appeals board." Graves says the lesson of that ruling was that the MPAA shouldn't wade into territory where it's deciding ratings based on merit and subject material.

"The danger of our switching our criteria for what we perceive to be good films is that, one day, you and I are not going to agree on what's good and what's bad," says Graves, who added that she does consider "Bully" a good film. "Our system has always been built on giving the level of content and letting parents make the decision."

Many are rallying behind a rating change for "Bully," including American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten.

"Films like Lee Hirsch's 'Bully' are critical in illustrating to students the painful consequences of bullying on their

classmates and our communities," Weingarten said in a statement. "Unfortunately, because of the film's R rating, students will be shut out and discouraged from viewing this film. By giving it a PG-13 rating, the MPAA can take a stand against bullying and ensure this powerful film reaches children across the country."

Katy Butler, a 17-year-old Michigan high school student, has gotten more than 185,000 signatures for an online petition to change the rating.

Of course, an R rating doesn't prohibit young people from seeing "Bully," it just means they can't attend on their own. Weinstein, who has four daughters, calls having to see a film with your parents a "kiss of death" for the experience.

"I want to sell 'Bully' like it's cool to see the movie," says the producer. "And then I want these kids to walk out of the movie theater and say, 'Wait, this is wrong.' ... When your children make the decision, it's so much stronger."



In this Nov. 23, 2011 photo, Harvey Weinstein, film producer and co-chairman of The Weinstein Company, poses for a photo in New York. Fresh off his Oscar glory with "The Artist," there's no silence for Weinstein when it comes to his next film.

Julie Taymor claims there was a 'Spider-Man' plot

NEW YORK (AP)—Director Julie Taymor has hit back at her former creative partners in "Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark," arguing in court papers that she was the victim of a conspiracy to unfairly push her out of the production and that her one-time collaborators were secretly working on a rival script behind her back.

Taymor's legal team on Friday defended the Tony Award winner against claims in an earlier countersuit from producers, the latest installment in their bitter legal battle over financial rewards for Broadway's most expensive show.

"While secretly conspiring to oust Taymor and use and change her work without pay, the producers also fraudulently induced Taymor to continue working and to diligently make improvements," her team alleges.

Taymor, who was the original "Spider-Man" director and co-book writer, was fired in March after years of delays, accidents and critical backlash. The show, which features music by U2's Bono and The Edge, opened in November 2010 but spent months in previews before officially opening a few days after the Tony Awards in June. It has become a financial hit at the box office.

Producers shot back late Friday. "It's very disheartening for the former director of the show to take no responsibility for the consequences of her actions while, at the same time, trying to claim credit for the show's success," Dale Cendali, an attorney for the producers, said in a statement.

In November, Taymor slapped the producers—led by Michael Cohl and Jeremiah J. Harris—as well as Glen Berger,



In this Sept. 10, 2010 file photo, Julie Taymor, director of the musical "Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark," is photographed in New York.

her former co-book writer, with a federal copyright infringement lawsuit, alleging they violated her creative rights and haven't compensated her for the work she put into the \$75 million show. In January, the producers filed a counterclaim asserting the copyright claims are baseless. The latest salvo is Taymor's team responding to that counterclaim.

In the legal filing, Taymor claims she was ousted not because she wasn't willing to cooperate with changes but simply to appease investors, sway critics to the idea that the show was being fixed, bilk her of royalties and "mask the producers' own failures."

The document says she was fired during a lunch meeting at The Lamb's Club restaurant by the producers, Bono and The Edge. Playwright Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa was hired to work on the book and Philip William McKinley stepped in to direct.

The filing quotes from emails between her and the producers,

Berger and Bono and The Edge, painting a picture of a creative team very supportive of Taymor's direction and vision. She also claims she had no part in the accidents that injured actors and embarrassed the production and that Bono and The Edge's frequent absences from the theater "hampered timely improvements."

The filing describes a behind-the-scenes atmosphere that was secretive and slightly paranoid. Taymor alleges that Berger was told to quietly work on changes to the story without Taymor's knowledge—called "Plan X"—that in an email Berger complained led him to lead a "double life"—both working with and against Taymor.

The document quotes Berger in an email to Bono complaining that "it's a bit draining" working for hours with Taymor "on scenes I know in my heart-of-hearts are wrong." Taymor claims she was unaware of any alternative story line until after being fired and yet she was to have final approval on the musical's book.

The stunt-heavy show has been doing brisk business ever since it opened its doors and most weeks easily grossing more than the \$1.2 million the producers have indicated they need to reach to stay viable. Over the Christmas holiday, the show earned the highest single-week gross of any show in Broadway history.

Taymor alleges that the show has not been re-imagined and that what audiences are seeing at the Foxwoods Theatre is essentially the same show she directed. "The producers' current suggestion that they have created a 'new' show after a mere three-week shutdown is false and incredible," the filing says.

Ariz. sheriff's Obama investigator selling book

PHOENIX (AP)—The lead investigator in an Arizona sheriff's investigation into President Obama's birth certificate is selling his report as a book.

Retired detective and volunteer Maricopa County sheriff's posse member Mike Zullo is listed as the co-author of "A Question of Eligibility," an e-book for sale through Amazon and Barnes and Noble.

The book is a copy of the in-

vestigation findings presented to the press Thursday.

Zullo's co-author is Jerome Corsi, a well-known political conspiracy writer.

Phoenix television station KTVK reports (<http://bit.ly/ykO9vU>) Corsi denied using Sheriff Joe Arpaio, the self-proclaimed toughest sheriff in the country, as a promotional tool to sell his books and theories. Corsi supplied much of the

research for the sheriff's office investigation.

Arpaio said at a news conference Thursday that his volunteer investigator found probable cause that the president's birth certificate is fake. Obama's campaign spokesman Ben LaBolt offered a light-hearted dismissal of Arpaio's probe, tweeting a link to a snippet from the TV series "The X-Files."



Maricopa County Sheriff's Department Cold Case Posse lead investigator Michael Zullo explains the preliminary findings of Sheriff Joe Arpaio's investigation into the authenticity of President Barack Obama's birth certificate and other issues surrounding his eligibility to be President during a news conference on Thursday, March 1, 2012, in Phoenix.

Winfrey to interview Houston's daughter, family

NEW YORK (AP)—Oprah Winfrey has landed an interview with Whitney Houston's daughter and other family members for a TV special that will air on the Oprah Winfrey Network.

"Oprah's Next Chapter" will feature an interview with 18-year-old Bobbi Kristina, Houston's only child. It will also include Patricia Houston, who's the singer's sister-in-law and manager, as well as the singer's brother Gary. It is scheduled to air March 11.

The superstar was found dead in a bathtub at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif., on Feb. 11. An exact cause of death has yet to be determined.

Winfrey was one of the guests invited to Houston's funeral in Newark, N.J., last month.

Houston was 48 years old. Her daughter turns 19 Sunday.

► Oprah Winfrey poses with her honorary Oscar at the 84th Academy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles. AP

Memorials to honor Monkees singer Davy Jones

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—The heart attack that killed Monkees heartthrob Davy Jones came while the singer was in his stable surrounded by his beloved horses.

The star's spokeswoman, Helen Kensick, offered the detail Friday, two days after Jones died in Florida.

She says Jones spent his final days surrounded by family and riding horses before his sudden death.

A funeral in Florida will be private. Kensick says public services to honor Jones will be held in New York and in England, though the details have not been finalized.

Jones rocketed to stardom in the 1960s as a member of The Monkees. Though their television show lasted just two years and the group ultimately broke up, they have endured with such chart-topping hits as "I'm a Believer" and "Daydream Believer." Jones was 66.



Philippines: No airport hassle for Taylor Kitsch

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A Philippine official says "Friday Night Lights" star Taylor Kitsch was not hassled at Manila's airport recently, as the Canadian actor indicated this week.

Kitsch said Wednesday on the "Late Show with David Letterman" that customs officers stopped him at the airport and

ordered him back to Japan because his passport didn't have enough pages to stamp his arrival. He was to finish filming Oliver Stone's "Savages" in the Philippines.

Kitsch said he was let in only after proving with his iPhone that he was an actor.

Philippine Customs chief



AP
In this Thursday, March 1, 2012 file photo, Taylor Kitsch arrives for the UK premiere of John Carter at a central London venue.

Ruffy Biazon wrote in his blog Friday that no airport records show Kitsch visited Manila, and that his officers do not stamp passports.

Kitsch is best known for his role as American football star Tim Riggins on the television series "Friday Night Lights."

Will happy long-distance couple be happy together?

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend, "Jackson," and I have been in a long-distance relationship for two years. We recently learned that we both have been accepted to our "dream" college, which means we'll live close to each other for the first time. I'm excited, but nervous about what the adjustment will be like.

Jackson is my first boyfriend, so I don't know what it's like to be with someone who can physically be around all the time. Normally, we communicate by phone or video chat and lead our separate lives. But when we visit each other, our days just revolve around the two of us. I miss Jackson when we're apart, but I enjoy having the freedom to study, hang out with friends and have "me time" while still being in a happy relationship.

From what I have heard, college life is fun, but busy. I love Jackson and want to be with him, but I also want to make new friends and focus on schoolwork. (He wants that, too.) I'm afraid that once we get to college we'll either be so wrapped up in each other that we miss out on other stuff, or get so busy with school and friends that we never see each other. Jackson shares my concerns, but neither of us knows how to make sure we strike a good balance. Can you help us?

ANXIOUS IN FLORIDA

DEAR ANXIOUS: You and your boyfriend need to be sure your priorities are in order when you get to school. First and foremost you're both there to get an education. And aside from academics, a part of that education is developing relationships and availing yourself of experiences beyond the field you will be studying. While spending time together is important, so is balance, so keep in mind that too much togetherness can distract from your studies or even become so claustrophobic that it kills the relationship.

DEAR ABBY: I was born in a small Midwestern town in the mid-1960s. An out-of-wedlock pregnancy then was a huge scandal, so my mother married someone who wasn't my father and my biological father vanished. I found out about it at 17 (not from her) and was told the name she claimed belonged to him. It's a very unique name.

I believe I have located him. Part of me wants to contact him—not to get anything, just to let him know I exist. Allegedly, Mom told him she was pregnant and he refused to marry her, but her truthfulness leaves much to be desired. I haven't been able to find his email address, but I have found a street address.

I'm not sure if I should contact him or not. Would it be too much of a disruption to hear from a daughter he wanted nothing to do with 45 years ago? I don't want to upset him or cause problems in his life, but I need some closure.

SOMEBODY'S CHILD IN ILLINOIS

DEAR SOMEBODY'S CHILD: It may not be a disruption, but it is certain to be a surprise. This would be easier if your mother's word was reliable, but you must work with what you have.

Write the man a letter explaining what you have told me, assuring him you want nothing from him, and giving him the details of your life, including your contact information. Send it by certified mail and request verification of delivery. Then cross your fingers that you have the right man, and that if he is, he has enough character to respond.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Report: 'Hawaii Five-0' star takes break from show

HONOLULU (AP)—A representative for Alex O'Loughlin says the "Hawaii Five-0" star is taking time away from the show to get treated for problems related to pain medication.

Rachael Wesolowski says in a report by the Honolulu Star-Advertiser that O'Loughlin "is taking a short break to receive supervised treatment for prescription pain medication due to a recent shoulder injury."

Series producer CBS Television Studios and O'Loughlin representatives declined to comment on the nature of

O'Loughlin's injuries or his treatment.

O'Loughlin, who portrays crime fighter Steve McGarrett, is known for doing many of his own stunts on the action-packed show. The paper says he report-

edly will be absent for at least one episode.

CBS says in a statement that "everyone at CBS Television Studios and 'Hawaii Five-0' wishes him well and we look forward to his return."

Stones to release 50th-anniversary book

NEW YORK (AP)—Still no word on a Rolling Stones anniversary tour, but the band will mark its 50th year with a new book.

Hyperion announced Friday that it will publish "The Rolling Stones: 50," an illustrated autobiography. The book, featuring

rare photographs and commentary from the band, is scheduled for the fall.

The Stones have told their story in book form before. "According to the Rolling Stones," an oral history, was released by Chronicle Books in 2003.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



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By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

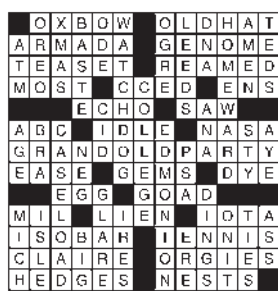


CROSSWORD

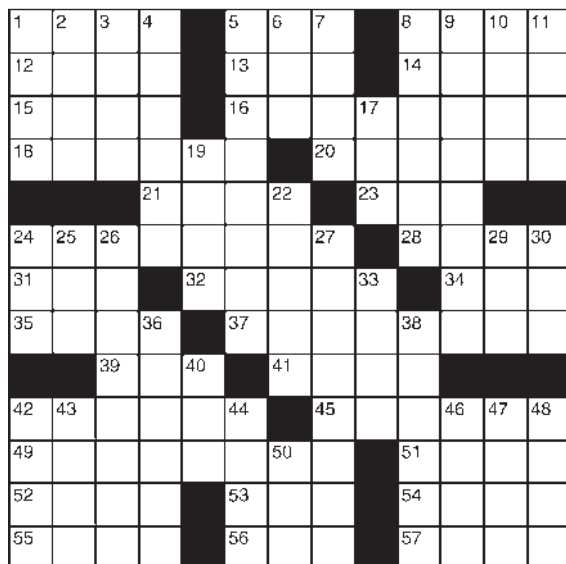
By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
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- 5 Tree fluid
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- 12 "Gone With the Wind" plantation
- 13 Actress Carrere
- 14 Letter jumble (Abbr.)
- 15 "Yeah, right!"
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- 17 Help
- 19 Bausch's partner
- 22 Reeked
- 24 Recede
- 25 — Paulo, Brazil
- 26 Prosperous
- 27 Uniformity
- 29 "To be or —"
- 30 Sock part
- 33 Sandwich cookie
- 36 Needing more sleep, maybe
- 38 Oral
- 40 Make a mistake
- 42 Big party
- 43 In the thick of
- 44 Long story
- 46 Horse's neck hair
- 47 Prayer ending
- 48 Legislation
- 50 Bill

Solution time: 24 mins.



Saturday's answer 3-5



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kevin Connolly, 38; Matt Lucas, 38; Eva Mendes, 38; Dean Stockwell, 76.

Happy Birthday: Don't slow down when you should be gearing up and building momentum. What you do this year can determine whether you gain ground in the coming years or struggle to maintain what you have. Think big, but keep things simple and stick to a budget that will ease your stress, not make it skyrocket. Your numbers are 3, 9, 13, 25, 28, 32, 41.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Express your feelings and what you intend to do to make your life better socially, personally and emotionally. Don't allow someone else to make choices for you. Recognize that too much of anything will bring you down. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Take precautions when it comes to your home and family. Protect your assets and reputation. Don't let emotions complicate matters by overreacting to occurrences that need practical attention. Learn from past mistakes and you'll avoid an unpleasant situation. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will annoy someone with your choices, but you must follow the path that suits you best. Take care of any paperwork that might pose a problem if left undone. Follow all rules and regulations, and move full steam ahead. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Put your heart into your work and improvements you can make. Don't let changes affect your productivity. An aggressive and playful ap-

proach to your important personal relationship will give you a better understanding of friendship and love. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Stick to basics, but be original. You can create a stir if you use your quick wit and charm to impress someone you'd like to get to know better. Travel plans will lead to information that will help you make an important decision. ★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Make your investments work for you. Don't leave anything to chance. Focus on getting the most for the least and stick to whatever budget you set. Love and romance are in the stars, but that doesn't mean you should spend. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Look at your personal and professional relationships and make changes to strengthen the connections or to rid yourself of the people who are holding you back. Don't make a fuss when all that's required is to move on. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Get your priorities straight. You may feel like having fun, but you need to take care of your responsibilities first. You can make or break a relationship with someone depending on how you handle your share of the work. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Avoid storytelling or getting involved in gossip. You should be focusing on your investments and contracts, and networking with people who motivate you. Any changes made to your domestic scene will pay off. Love is in the stars. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You may not want to initiate a conversation about emotional matters, but you'd be wise to clear up any misunderstanding or problem before you try to move forward with your plans. You can stretch your money by making the choice. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Nothing is as bad or difficult as it might seem. Taking care of personal matters or getting together with someone special will help ease your stress. Keep things simple and be direct when discussing money matters to come out ahead. ★★★★★

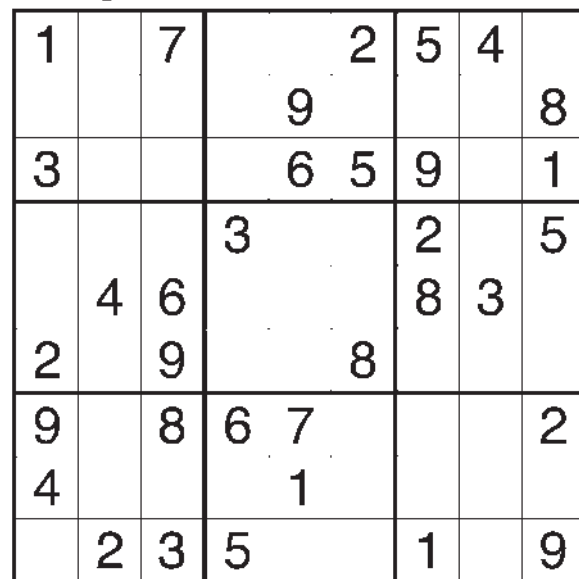
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't go overboard or someone who can influence your future may think you are extravagant. Use your ingenuity, imagination and ability to get others to do things for you for free, and you will show skills that impress and bring you rewards. ★★★

Birthday Baby: You are imaginative, versatile and quick to judge. You are bold and courageous. Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



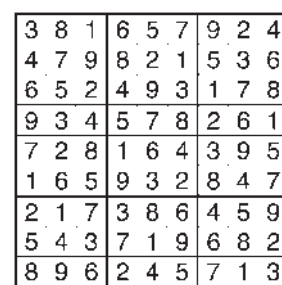
Difficulty Level ★

3/05

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Saturday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★★★

3/05

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

WHITNEY HOUSTON (1963-2012)

Solution: 6 letters



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Almost, Aretha, Arista, Baby, Believe, Blues, Bobbi, Body Guard, Break, Broken, Cinderella, Cissy, Clive, Crown, Davis, Dionne, Elizabeth, Emma, Exhale, Faith, Fame, Fans, Fine, Franklin, Gary, Gospel, Greatest, Hearts, Hold Me, John, Know, Kristina, Love, Model, Music, Preacher's Wife, Rhythm, Saving, So Emotional, Solo, Star, Tour, Waiting, Wanna Dance, Warwick, Year

Last Saturday's Answer: Backbenchers

Find the COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 or 35 for \$5.95 each, \$1.00 for 10 or more. Universal Jolick, LLC, 33 Seaside Ave., Suite 100, Rockville, MD 20850. Tel: 301-761-1111. Fax: 301-761-1112. E-mail: info@universaljolick.com. ©2012 Universal Jolick, LLC. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

CLASSIFIED ADS

WHATZIT Solution: Receding hairline

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIAN ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MII TUNGANE TEKOPUA, DECEASED NO. 12-0043 CV

NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

TO: The Heirs of Mii Tungane Tekopua, Deceased:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on April 10, 2012, at the hour of 1:30 pm in the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, there will be a hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration filed by petitioner Herbert D. Soll in the above-titled case, for the purpose of requesting that the Superior Court grant petitioner letters of administration to administer the estate of Mii Tungane Tekopua, deceased.

DATED this 23rd day of February, 2012 at Saipan, CNMI.

/s/ Herbert D. Soll
Petitioner

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Requires: Associate Degree in Human Resource or Business Management with at least 4 years of HR experience in the Recruitment, Employee Relations and Compensation and Benefits functions. Must be knowledgeable of local and federal employment laws and proficient in MS Office applications especially Excel and Power Point. Ability to speak or understand Chinese Mandarin is an advantage.

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Requires: Associate's Degree in Finance or Accounting with at least 2 years work experience in cash management within a busy working environment. Must be proficient in the use of MS Excel, Word and Power Point. Must be able to work under time pressure, meet tight deadlines and can work flexible hours.

Administrative Assistant (2)
Requires: High School Diploma, GED or equivalent. Must be proficient in various computer software applications. Preferably Chinese speaking, and able to read, write, and understand Mandarin. Must be able to consistently demonstrate good customer service and interpersonal skills at work. Can work flexible hours. Must be available to work on weekends, holidays and weeknights.

Applications can be obtained at HR Office at the 2nd floor of the JP Center in Beach Road. To be considered, applications must be submitted not later than March 9, 2012. Background checks and pre-employment drug testing will be required prior to employment.

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 - 1 year experience and knowledge in handling laboratory supplies, equipment, and reagents.
 - Knowledge in medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, equipment, and reagents.
 - 1 year experience in sales and marketing
 - Excellent verbal and written communication skills
 - Available to work during nights and weekends (when needed)
 - Valid CNMI Driver's License

** Applicants may be interviewed and tested.

Interested applicant may contact: MedPharm at (671) 632-6000 or email: medpharm@medpharmusa.com

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• 3-Liner	\$15	\$27
• 5-Liner	\$24	\$39
• 3-Liner with picture	\$24	\$42
• 5-Liner with picture	\$36	\$57

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■ All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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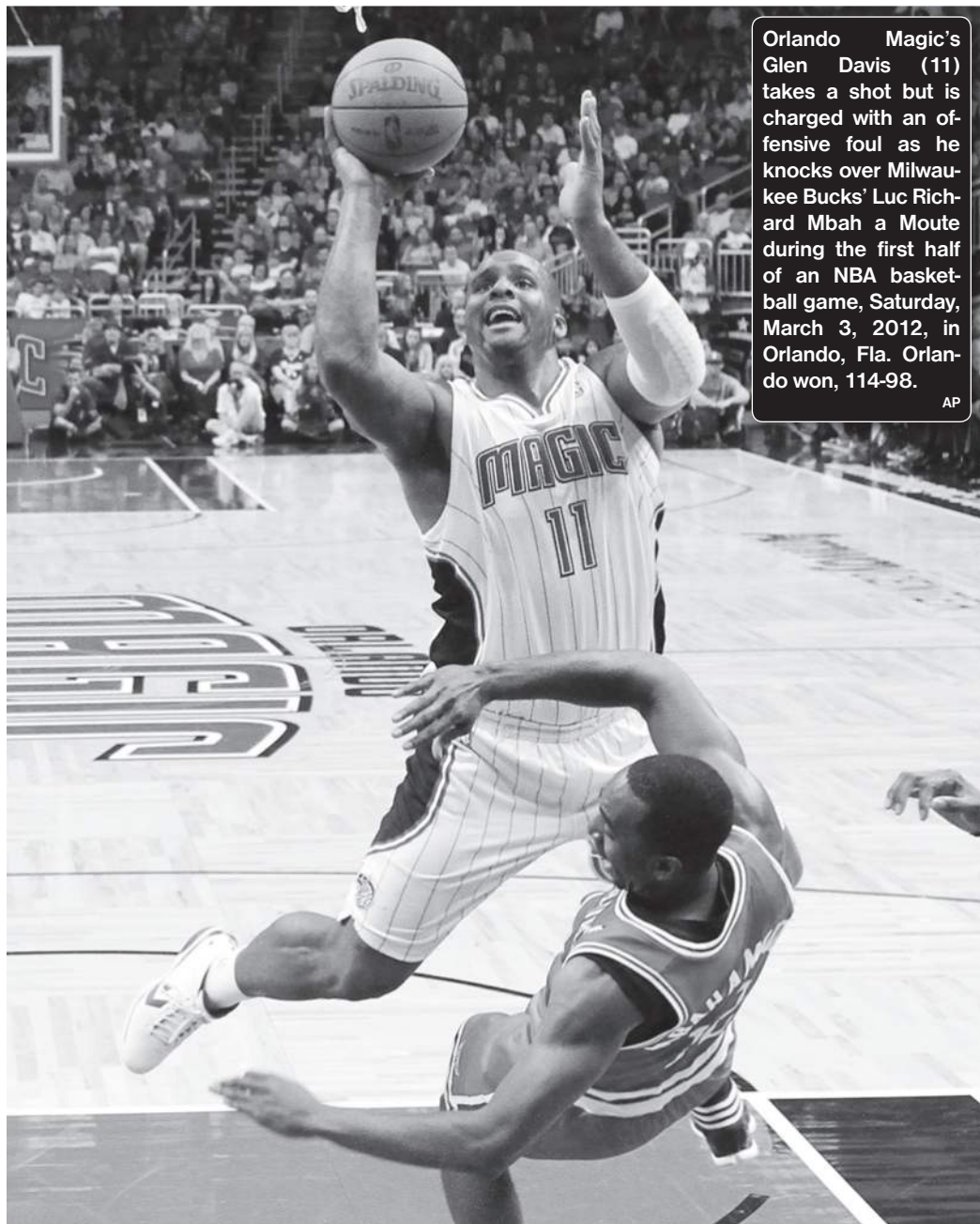
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Magic get fourth straight win against Bucks



Orlando Magic's Glen Davis (11) takes a shot but is charged with an offensive foul as he knocks over Milwaukee Bucks' Luc Richard Mbah a Moute during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, March 3, 2012, in Orlando, Fla. Orlando won, 114-98. AP

ORLANDO (AP) Dwight Howard had 28 points and 14 rebounds to lead six Magic players in double figures, and Orlando beat the Milwaukee Bucks 114-98 on Saturday night.

The game was close until the Magic pulled away in the fourth quarter thanks to some hot 3-point shooting and dominant play from Howard.

Jason Richardson had 18 points for the Magic, while Hedo Turkoglu and Ryan Anderson chipped in 16 points apiece. The Magic shot 51.7 percent (14 of 27) from 3-point distance.

It was the Magic's fourth victory over the Bucks in 22 days. The Magic overcame fourth-quarter deficits in the first three wins, but they didn't need a comeback on Saturday night.

Timberwolves 122, Blazers 110

In Portland, Kevin Love scored a season-high 42 points and added 10 rebounds, and the Minnesota Timberwolves snapped a 16-game losing streak to the Portland Trail Blazers with a 122-110 victory on Saturday night.

The Timberwolves had not defeated the Blazers since a 94-93 victory at home on March 25, 2007. The Timberwolves hadn't won in Portland since Dec. 7, 2005, a string of 11 straight games.

Love was just one shy of his career-best 43 points scored at Denver on Dec. 18, 2010.

Former Blazers swingman Martel Webster added 21 points and eight rebounds for the Timberwolves.

Gerald Wallace had 25 points and 14 rebounds for the Blazers, who have lost nine of their last 13 games. Nicolas Batum finished with 29 points.

Blazers All-Star LaMarcus Aldridge, who was averaging 22.1 points and 8.3 rebounds going into the game, was held to 14 points and seven boards before fouling out with just under five minutes left in the fourth quarter.

Wizards 101, Cavaliers 98

In Washington, Jordan Crawford scored 31 points and John Wall added 24 to lead the Wizards.

Antawn Jamison scored 29 in his return to Washington but missed a 3-point attempt to tie the game with 35 seconds to play. It was Jamison's first appearance in the Verizon Center since being traded from the Wizards to Cleveland in February 2010.

JaVale McGee had nine points and 12 rebounds for Washington, which snapped a six-game losing streak.

Kyrie Irving scored 20 points, 12 in the fourth quarter, and Ryan Hollins had 15 for the Cavaliers, who lost their fifth straight.

Mavericks 102, Jazz 96

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored a season-high 40 points and Dallas snapped its four-

game losing streak.

Nowitzki scored 10 points in the fourth quarter as the Mavericks turned away a late rally by the Jazz, who sliced a 23-point deficit down to five points.

Dallas forward Lamar Odom played for the first time after missing four games because of a family matter and personal reasons. Odom was supposed to play Saturday night in the NBA Development League. Instead, he was recalled to play against the Jazz and scored nine points in 18 minutes.

Paul Millsap scored 24 points and Derrick Favors added 14 points for Utah, which beat the Miami Heat on Friday night.

Hawks 97, Thunder 90

In Atlanta, Josh Smith scored 13 of his 30 points in the fourth quarter, Jeff Teague added 16 points and Atlanta snapped Oklahoma City's seven-game winning streak.

Kevin Durant finished with 35 points, going 14 of 17 on free throw attempts, and Russell Westbrook had 25 points for the league-best Thunder.

Smith, who matched a season-high in scoring and pulled down seven of his 12 rebounds in the fourth, had dunks on consecutive possessions to give the Hawks an 87-79 lead with 4:43 remaining.

Then, after forcing Durant to commit a turnover and pounding his first against his own chest with 3:04 left, Smith matched Durant 3-pointer for

3-pointer to put Atlanta up 92-88 at the 2-minute mark.

Pacers 102, Hornets 84

In Indiana, Danny Granger scored 20 points and Indiana got its first six-game winning streak in seven years.

David West had 14 points and 13 rebounds in his first game back in New Orleans after playing the first eight years of his career with the Hornets. Darren Collison added 13 points, including a circus shot at the halftime buzzer.

Indiana, playing only its second game in the last 10 days, blew it

open with a 21-4 run to take a 54-37 lead at the half. The Pacers led by 30 in the fourth quarter.

Jarrett Jack scored 18 and Marco Belinelli added 15 for New Orleans, which played its third game in four days and dressed only nine players for the second consecutive night. The Hornets avoided their most lopsided loss of the season by outscoring the Pacers 19-7 to close the game.

Grizzlies 100, Pistons 83

In Memphis, O.J. Mayo scored 17 points and sparked a fourth-quarter rally with his 3-point

shooting, and Memphis won its fourth straight.

Mayo was 4 of 5 outside the arc, connecting on all three attempts in the fourth quarter, when Memphis broke open a close game with 17 unanswered points.

Marc Gasol added 17 points and nine rebounds. Marreese Speights had 16 points, and Rudy Gay added 15. Quincy Pondexter had 10 of his 12 points in the fourth quarter, while Mike Conley finished with 10 points and 12 assists.

Rodney Stuckey led the Pistons with 20 points, although he was 6 of 22 from the field.

McIlroy closes in on No. 1 in the world



**P A L M
B E A C H
GARDENS,
Fla. (AP)—**

Rory McIlroy is one round away from No. 1 in the world.

McIlroy made two big par saves Saturday on a windy back nine at PGA National and finished with a birdie from the bunker for a 4-under 66, giving him a two-shot lead over Harris English and Tom Gillis in the Honda Classic.

McIlroy was in a similar position a week ago when he reached the final of the Match Play Championship - win and the 22-year-old from Northern Ireland becomes the second-youngest player behind Tiger Woods to be No. 1 in the world.

Only this time, there is more than one player to contend with in the final round. Five players were within four shots of the lead, a group that includes PGA champion Keegan Bradley.

"I wasn't standing up 2 up on the first tee in the final," McIlroy said, smiling.

The group does not include Woods. He finally made a few putts, but not nearly enough to keep pace with everyone else. Woods went the last 11 holes without a birdie and had to settle for a 69, leaving him nine shots behind.

English, the 22-year-old rookie who won on the Nationwide Tour last year while still an amateur, made a 10-foot par save on the 17th and finished with a 66. He will be in the final group with McIlroy, a rare time when the U.S. Open champion will be playing with someone his own age with a tournament on the line.

They will be joined by Gillis, a 43-year-old journeyman who turned pro a year after McIlroy and English were born. Gillis had the lead to himself on the back nine until a bogey on the par-3 15th. He had a 69.

McIlroy was at 11-under 199. "It's nice to have the lead going into tomorrow," he said. "I have to try to focus on what I've been trying to do all week, which is hit fairways and hit greens and stay in the present, and not think about everything

that could happen.

"I've just got to go out there and try to put a good number on the board."

The wind was at its strongest, though not too severe and the tees were moved forward on the par 3s over the water because of the dangerous front hole locations.

That's where McIlroy was at his best.

He hit 8-iron at the middle of the green on No. 5 with a draw that held up against the wind to 10 feet and made one of only 10 birdies on the day. On the 15th hole, the start of PGA National's famous finish, McIlroy hit 9-iron to just outside 5 feet, the closest anyone got in the third round.

There also was a bonus birdie on the par-4 11th, with water in front of the green. McIlroy was in mangled rough to the right, and the safe route was to play short and left of the green to avoid a big number. He blasted a 7-iron from 181 yards to the back fringe, and then holed a 50-foot putt. NBC Sports reporter Roger Maltbie walked by on the way to the 12th tee and said to him, "Really?"

McIlroy tried to contain a smile under his cap and curly brown hair.

Even so, his two key shots were for par. From the right rough on the 13th, the best he could manage was to hit into a front bunker, some 30 yards short of the flag. McIlroy nearly holed the shot to escape with par, and then he made an 8-foot-er for par on the next hole.

"They were two crucial holes today," he said.

English is showing that his win last summer on the Nationwide Tour was not an accident. He breezed through Q-school in December and has yet to miss a cut all year, though he has not finished better than a tie for 15th in the Phoenix Open.

Even so, he is polished and looks capable of winning, even against a player whom everyone is ready to crown as No. 1. English is among them, smiling when asked about playing a 22-year-old on the verge of going atop the world ranking.

"Rory is awesome," English said. "I haven't had a chance

to meet him yet, but I've definitely watched him play the last couple of years. He's got a great game and he deserves. I think he's the best player in the world right now, hands down, and I'm looking forward to tomorrow. He's very impressive."

Bradley had a 68 and was in the group at 7-under 203 with Brian Harman (69) and Justin Rose (71). Masters champion Charl Schwartzel wasted a good start with a double bogey on the 11th hole, but still had a 67 and was five shots behind.

The best Woods looked came early in his round, when he birdied the third hole from 7 feet, holed a 20-footer on the fourth for birdie, made a 15-foot par save on the sixth and stuffed his tee shot on the seventh into 4 feet.

That was his last birdie, though.

"I was close to putting a low one up there today," Woods said. "I felt like it could be had, I could make a run and post 5-under par for the day or something like that and get myself within reach. Right now, Rory is playing some great golf."

Starting times have been moved up for the final round because of storms in the forecast, meaning players will be in threesomes. Gillis could only laugh at the notion of a journeyman being in the last group with a pair of kids.

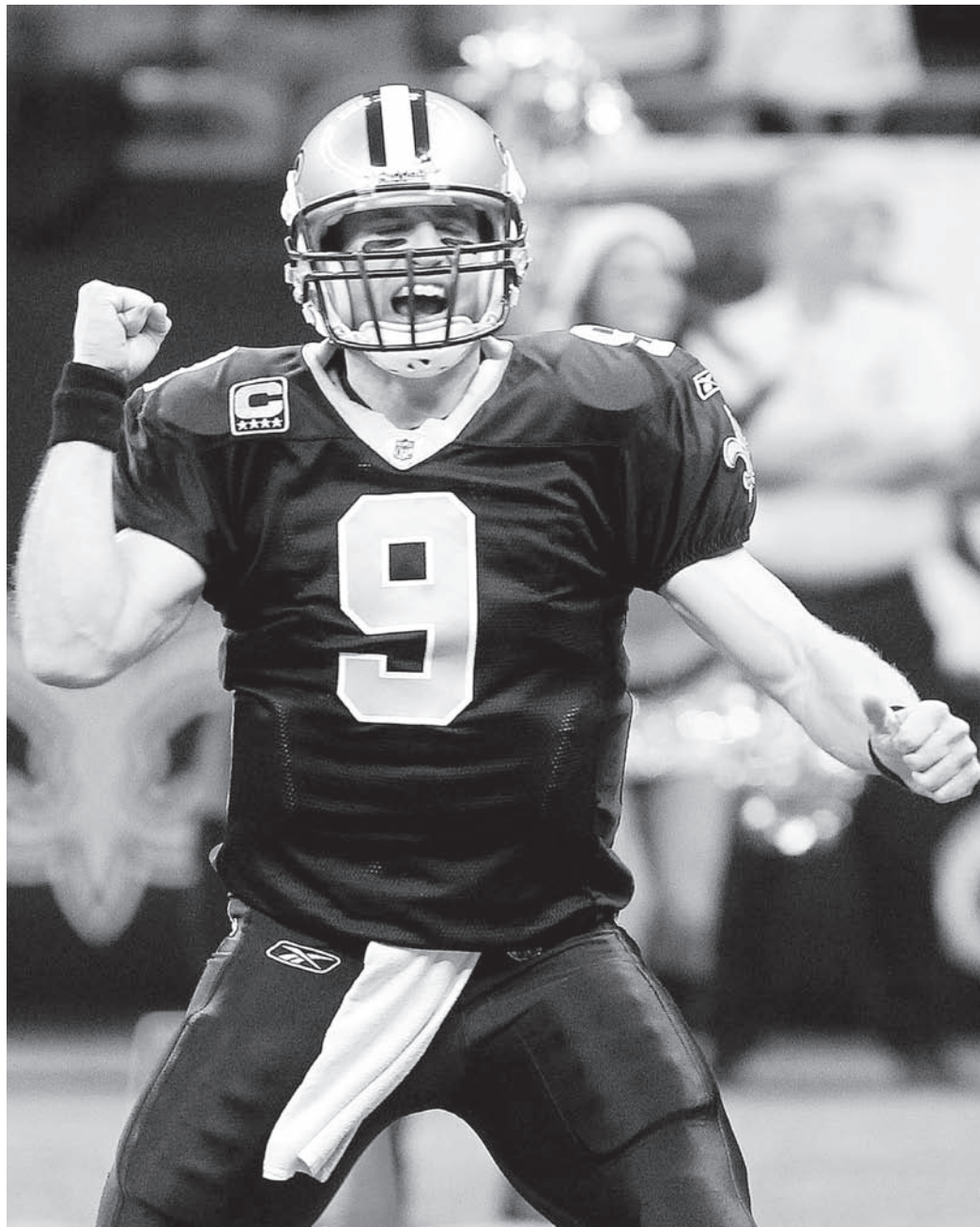
"Hopefully, they don't walk too fast and I can catch up to them," Gillis said.

Behind that self-deprecating humor, developed from toiling in 26 countries in a hardscrabble career, is a guy who has been around too long to be intimidated by much, even someone of McIlroy's ability.

Gillis dropped only one shot, going over the back of the par-3 15th and into the bunker, with his next shot stopped a few feet from going into the water. Otherwise, he was steady.

"I wish I could have got a couple out at the end to get a little closer to Rory," Gillis said. "He's not the type of guy you want to spot two shots to. But anything can happen on this golf course—anything. So we'll just add them up tomorrow."

Saints put franchise tag on quarterback Brees



In this Dec. 26, 2011 file photo, New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees celebrates a touchdown by running back Pierre Thomas in the first quarter of an NFL football game against the Atlanta Falcons, in New Orleans. The Saints have placed the franchise tag on Brees, giving them exclusive negotiating rights with their Pro Bowl quarterback for the next year.

METairie, La. (AP)—The New Orleans Saints have placed the franchise tag on Drew Brees, giving them exclusive negotiating rights with their Pro Bowl quarterback for the next year.

Brees has been involved in lengthy contract talks with the Saints and, without the tag, could have negotiated with other teams as a free agent. Team spokesman Greg Bensel said Saturday that the Saints were officially notifying the NFL of the designation.

The New Orleans Times-Picayune and ESPN.com previously reported that Brees would get the tag.

In January, Brees said he would be “beyond stunned” if he and the Saints are unable to agree on a contract extension during this offseason.

In 2011, Brees set NFL records with 468 completions, 5,476 yards passing and a completion percentage of 71.2. His prolific passing numbers helped the Saints set a new NFL high for total offensive yards in a season with 7,474.

He has been with the Saints for six seasons, leading them to a win in the 2010 Super Bowl.

Meanwhile, in Baltimore, Ray Rice has been designated the franchise player of the Ra-

vens, who hope to buy some time while negotiating a lengthy deal for the two-time Pro Bowl running back.

Rice’s contract expired after a season in which he amassed an NFL-best 2,068 yards from scrimmage and helped the Ravens advance to the AFC championship game.

As a franchise running back, Rice will earn \$7.7 million in 2012. Baltimore, however, intends to have him around a lot longer.

“As we have in the past, placing the franchise designation on a player allows us to keep negotiating on a long-term contract,” general manager Ozzie Newsome said Friday. “Our goal is to keep Ray Rice a Raven.”

Last September, Ravens defensive tackle Haloti Ngata traded his franchise tag for a five-year, \$61 million contract. Rice would like to follow a similar path.

Soon after Baltimore’s loss to New England in the AFC title game, Rice said, “I’m not going to complain about the franchise tag, but I prefer the long-term. That’s what Baltimore, the city, the fans, would love to know—that Ray Rice is going to be here, not just one year, but for many years to come.”

Rice scored a franchise-record 15 touchdowns in 2011

to go with a career-best 1,364 yards rushing. He also led Baltimore with 76 catches (for 704 yards).

In Illinois, Pro Bowl running back Matt Forte also received the franchise tag from the Chicago Bears last Friday.

Forte sprained the medial collateral ligament in his right knee early in a loss to Kansas City on Dec. 4 and sat out the rest of the season.

Without Forte and quarterback Jay Cutler, the Bears struggled down the stretch and finished third in the NFC North and missed the playoffs with an 8-8 record.

Forte still got selected to his first Pro Bowl, finishing with 1,487 yards from scrimmage and 997 rushing in his fourth season. He averaged 4.9 yards per carry. Forte was the first Chicago running back to make it to the Pro Bowl since Neal Anderson following the 1991 season.

Forte came into last season looking for an extension, but did not reach an agreement with the Bears.

Forte was reportedly offered a deal that guaranteed about \$13 million or \$14 million, but might have been looking for something closer to the five-year, \$43 million contract with \$21 million guaranteed that Carolina gave DeAngelo Williams.

New Orleans case puts scrutiny on NFL bounty pay

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—The revelations were shocking and appalling to those outside the NFL: A team paid bounties to knock opponents out of the game, including some of football’s biggest stars.

For those who suit up, however, it sounded more like the long-accepted cost of doing business in a brutal sport, a dirty little secret that everyone kept on the down low.

Atlanta Falcons star Roddy White called it a “league thing” that goes far beyond the New Orleans Saints. Shawne Merriman of the Buffalo Bills wondered what all the fuss was about, having long maintained he was targeted and sustained a career-altering injury. Former All-Pro guard Alan Faneca said he wasn’t surprised at all that a sordid system had finally been exposed.

“It’s a violent game we play. Whether people want to think about it or not, part of the game is to exert physical dominance over your opponent,” Faneca, who retired after the 2010 season, told The Associated Press on Saturday. “If it results in a guy not finishing the game, then that’s what happened in the course of playing the game.”

Former NFL player Matt Bowen was the bluntest one of all.

“Bounties, cheap shots, whatever you want to call them, they are a part of this game,” Bowen wrote Saturday in a column in the Chicago Tribune.

The NFL said Friday that Saints players and at least one assistant coach maintained a bounty pool of up to \$50,000 the last three seasons to reward game-ending injuries inflicted on opposing players, including star quarterbacks Brett Favre and Kurt Warner.

“Knockouts” were worth \$1,500 and “cart-offs” \$1,000, with payments doubled or tripled for the playoffs. According to the NFL, the pool amounts reached their height in 2009, the year the Saints won the Super Bowl.

The NFL investigation, by its own security department, delivered a blow to a league that has placed increased emphasis on safety, especially concerning concussions and dirty hits.

But as objectionable as many find the activity, is it a crime?

There was no immediate sign that prosecutors would investigate. The NFL has yet to hand out punishments, which could include suspensions, fines and loss of draft picks.

“I haven’t studied the issue yet and it’s not before us,” said Leon Cannizzaro, the district attorney of Orleans Parish in New Orleans.

Another government agency to keep an eye on: the Internal Revenue Service, which might view bounties

as extra income that wasn’t reported on tax returns.

Asked whether there is a culture of “bounties” that goes beyond the Saints, NFL spokesman Greg Aiello said: “If we find other violations of league rules, we will take action.” He declined to comment on whether other teams are being investigated.

If the news stunned NFL fans, it didn’t evoke the same reaction in seasoned players.

“It’s a league thing, but it’s about to end because of the Saints story,” White tweeted Saturday.

He also posted, “I got my own bounty on the Saints defense I want to kill them every year.”

The Falcons have a bitter rivalry with the Saints that dates to the 1960s, when they entered the league a year apart as expansion teams. They have long been in the same division, facing each other twice a season. When one of White’s Twitter followers asked if he knew how much the Saints might’ve paid to knock him out of a game, he replied, “At least a million dollars.”

Merriman, a three-time Pro Bowler, claims he was intentionally injured in 2007 while with the San Diego Chargers. in retaliation for hitting Tennessee quarterback Vince Young after a handoff. Merriman hasn’t been the same dominating player since the knee injury.

“Why is this a big deal now? Bounties been going on forever,” Merriman tweeted.

Former Saints defense coordinator Gregg Williams apologized and admitted overseeing the sordid program, which involved between 22 and 27 defensive players and, according to the NFL, was carried out with the knowledge of head coach Sean Payton.

“It was a terrible mistake, and we knew it was wrong while we were doing it,” said Williams, who is now defensive coordinator of the St. Louis Rams.

Bowen, who played strong safety in the NFL for seven years, said Williams had a similar bounty system during his tenure with the Washington Redskins.

“Prices were set on Saturday nights in the team hotel,” Bowen wrote in the Tribune. “In a makeshift meeting room, with the whisper of evening traffic pouring in from the Beltway, we laid our bounties on opposing players. We targeted big names, our sights set on taking them out of the game.”

From Bowen’s perspective, it was the price of doing business.

“It’s a fundamental part of the NFL’s culture that isn’t talked about outside of team facilities,” he wrote. “I’m not saying it’s right. Or ethical. But the NFL isn’t little league football with neighborhood dads playing head coach. This is the business of winning. If that

means stepping over some line, you do it.”

This isn’t the first time the bounty business has surfaced in the NFL.

In 1989, then-Dallas coach Jimmy Johnson claimed that his Philadelphia counterpart, Buddy Ryan, took out a bounty on two Cowboys players. The game became known as the “Bounty Bowl.”

Ryan’s son, Rex, now coaches the New York Jets and said he has never ordered his players to take someone out.

“I’ve never condoned it and I’ve never coached it,” he said in a statement.

Detroit Lions defensive end Lawrence Jackson took a similar stance.

“In every locker room, it’s posted clearly: No exceptions to the rule on bounties for hurting people,” he said at a sports conference in Boston Saturday. “I just don’t believe it’s right, on a human level.”

But another Lions player, tight end Tony Scheffler, conceded that all teams walk an ethical fine line.

“There is a lot of stuff that goes on over the course of the season,” he told the AP. “There might be something that happened in the first meeting between teams and that brings attention to a certain guy, who might’ve cheap-shotted a teammate, and then there’s an opportunity to get back at that guy.”

“But as far as coaches putting a bounty on a guy, I’ve never seen it. I have heard of it. The nature of the game is so physical and a lot goes into game preparation each week and those game plans always include getting physical with the best players on the other team.”

Former Washington quarterback Joe Theismann said he’s surprised it took this long for such an ugly, widespread case to be revealed. He knows for sure bounties were put out on him when he played in the 1970s and ’80s. His career ended on Nov. 18, 1985, when New York Giants linebacker Lawrence Taylor broke Theismann’s leg in a gruesome sack that exposed his broken bone on “Monday Night Football.”

“In a sick way, I guess it’s flattering,” Theismann told the AP. “If you had a bounty on you, you were a pretty good player and they wanted to get rid of you.”

He said bounties are probably not as widespread as they once were, with the league’s increased emphasis on safety.

“It’s a violent game and this is part of the game that I’m sure the NFL doesn’t want fans to know of,” said retired offensive lineman Pete Kendall, who played in the league for 13 seasons. “But it shouldn’t stun anybody who spent any time working in that game.”

Tenorio secures third boxing championship

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



United States Naval Academy senior midshipman Jonathan Jake C. Tenorio won his third 165-lb boxing title in the 71st Annual USNA Boxing Brigade Championships held in front of about 3,500 spectators at the Alumni Hall in Annapolis, Maryland late last month.

The crafty veteran from Mangilao, Guam earned a split-decision win over junior serviceman Mike Birnbaum of Midlothian, Virginia.

The 24-year-old Tenorio was the favored bet coming into the bout and Brinbaum's swollen face and bloody nose by the start of the third round bell were a testament to the assumption. Tenorio started strong and soundly took the first round, but admittedly felt he lost the second round before coming back with a vengeance in the third to get the nod.

He won the fight with his superior technical boxing fun-



United States Naval Academy senior midshipman Jonathan Jake C. Tenorio, left, has his hand raised by the referee after beating Mike Birnbaum in their 165-lb bout in the 71st Annual USNA Boxing Brigade Championships held at the Alumni Hall in Annapolis, Maryland late last month.

damentals, despite the relentless attacks by the feisty up-and-coming contender. After the fight, Tenorio tipped his cap

to Birnbaum for having a true fighter's spirit. The judges acknowledged Birnbaum's heart and toughness as well by giving

him a split-decision falter. All in all, it was a nice comeback back win for Tenorio, who came off a recent loss to Army's Zoar Morales in their bout held at West Point early December 2011.

After last month's bout, Tenorio and company will be gearing up for the Mid-West Regional competition scheduled from March 16 to 18 in Morgantown, West Virginia. The anticipated Nationals are slated for April 6 and 7 in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Boxing is a required physical education course for all USNA midshipmen and those who want to take their skills to the next level join the Navy boxing team, which has been coached by Jim McNally for over 25 years. The team also competes in the National Collegiate Boxing Association.

McNally is a former boxing official who had judged 29 international boxing events, 10 world amateur championships, the 2007 Pan-American Games, and the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China.

Runners in the 50K also went to Banzai, but had to take extra climb at Capital Hill (just before heading up to Mt. Tapochao road) before returning to Micro Beach.

"It was nice, fun race. The weather was good and a lot of people were on the road greeting you," said Wahinya, who was a guest runner in last year's half marathon race.

In the women's division, Yoko Yamazawa was the runaway winner with her time of 4:19:21, more than 30 minutes ahead of Kimie Yamashita. Completing the Top 6 were Shiori Honda (4:57:51), Eiko Kimura (5:07:17), Yui Asao (5:22:51), and Sachiko Suzuki (5:22:59).

Meanwhile, the list of winners in the half marathon and 10K races will be published later this week.

runs, and a base on balls. The Lions were held to just four hits.

BIG LEAGUE Hustlers 8, Lions 7

The Hustlers led, 4-2, after three innings and stretched the margin, 6-3, in the bottom of the fourth. McJarrel Espina reached on a dropped third strike with one out and later scored off a fielder's choice that left everybody safe. The stumbles helped set up an RBI single by Manny Flores.

The Lions swiped back to briefly tie the match in the fifth, 6-6, but the Hustlers paced on, 8-6, in the bottom frame off a sacrifice fly by MacGarette Duenas and another error.

The Hustlers defense held strong in the clutch and limited the Lions to just one run in the sixth inning.

Winning pitcher Kevin Vilagomez allowed four earned runs off three hits and four walks with six strikeouts.

MAMI

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cheering hard for her at the finish line at Micro Beach.

Oshima-Berger, who lost to Hirao in less than three minutes last year, crossed the finish line only more than a minute ahead of Japanese Natsuko Muramatsu (3:11:01). She also met her target, which she set at 3:10:00.

"I was in the lead group heading to Banzai and when we went down it was too windy and I am thankful for this group of Chinese runners who had me in the middle of their group so they were blocking the wind," the 42-year-old runner said.

Oshima-Berger was talking of Skechers Go Run where overall marathon finisher and men' champion Shuai Yang

belonged. Yang completed the race under three hours, clocking in at 2:50:28 and beating 2011 runner-up Hidekatsu Kuroda of Japan (2:57:10). Three other Chinese runners rounded out the Top 6 of the men's division—Xialong Yin (3:05:30), Zichen Wang (3:07:38), and Changming Liu (3:18:05). Completing the list was Sean Smith (3:19:57).

"It was my first time to race on Saipan and I had a good run. Hopefully, I can return next year," said the 25-year-old student from Shanghai, who also competed in China and Japan races.

In the women's division, joining Oshima-Berger and Muramatsu in the Top 6 were Japanese Mina Nagaoka (3:21:40), Ami Mizuno (3:31:50), and Junko Kobayashi (3:49:03), and Chinese Chen Siyuan (3:25:36).

four RBIs and three runs. Mendiola batted 3-for-4 with an RBI and three runs.

JUNIORS Red Sox 4, Fielders 2

The Red Sox held a 2-1 edge after the opening frame and pushed ahead, 4-1, in the third inning off two hits and some untimely infield errors.

Notably, Red Sox's Jerald Cabrera poked an RBI single and Roke Tenorio followed with an RBI triple earlier in the first inning.

After the third frame it was kept at a standstill for the remainder of the contest.

The Fielders managed a run in the top of the fourth inning, but lost two base runners in the next frame. The Fielders then came up dry in the sixth and left runners at third and second in their final stand. Tough break for the visitors who made a nice defensive stand that left them with a chance in the late innings.

The full marathon, which drew over 100 runners, started at 4:30am under a cold and windy weather. Full marathon racers headed to as far as the Banzai Cliff before returning to Micro Beach.

In the longest race of the day—the 50K ultra marathon—former Olympian Eric Wainaina Wahinya topped the field with a blistering time of 3:32:19.

The 38-year-old runner, who represented Kenya in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and the 2000 Games in Sydney, Australia, but is now based in Japan, was the lone competitor to finish the 50K race under four hours. Runner-up Akihiko Futaki of Japan came in at the 4:08:20 mark, followed by Taku Jyuuda (4:10:15), Shin-ichiro Marui (4:22:47), Yoshihiro Narui (4:29:35), and Ippei Asai (4:45:17).

Cabrera pitched a two-hitter on the mound and gave up two earned runs and five walks with five strikeouts. Jhace Palacios batted 2-for-2 with two runs, a stolen base, and two bases on balls, while Tenorio swung 2-for-3 with an RBI.

SENIORS Fielders 11, D-9ers 2

The Fielders enjoyed a solid 5-1 advantage off five hits after four innings before tacking on three more runs in the sixth off three hits, a bean ball, and an error at second base.

The Fielders then added a run in the sixth from a pick attempt in the dirt and trotted ahead with a home run by Zachary Sasamoto and a triple by Jaime Aldan, who was then driven home by Keene Deleon Guerrero in the seventh inning.

Gayvan Uchau batted 3-for-4 with an RBI and two runs for the Fielders, while DL Guerrero swung 2-for-3 with an RBI, two

SIS

From Page 28

came into the weekend tournament ranked second and had to battle the much-improved GCA squad twice in Sunday's closing rounds.

SIS1 first went through Kagman High School and MHS's junior varsity on Saturday before meeting GCA for the first time yesterday morning. The Lady Geckos managed to take the opening set of their first match over the Lady Eagles, 25-19, but failed to sweep the game after losing the close second set, 25-27. SIS 1 was way behind in the second set, 3-14, but managed to crawl its way back to knot the count at 21-all, before GCA finally pulled it back together.

Then in the deciding third set, SIS 1 caught a second wind after the marathon, coming back from a 7-9 deficit and stealing a 15-9 win to advance to the finals undefeated. Bracken held the serve at the turning point and led the Lady Geckos to victory with four aces.

"It was one of the best matches I have seen in a very long time. In fact this weekend was the first time that the girls really played together as a unit all sea-

son. I knew they had it in them and I am very proud that they stepped up when it needed the most," Saiki said.

Saiki hit the nail right on the head as SIS1 caught fire from that point and went on to finish off GCA in the finals, 25-22, 25-15.

Notably, the Lady Eagles settled for a third place finish last year and put up quite a fight in both losses. GCA improved from 2011 and finished the regular season with a league best record of 11 wins and one loss, which it absorbed at the hands of none other than SIS 1. The Lady Eagles fought their way back for a shot at the title this time around and certainly provided a tough test on both fronts. The GCA Lady Eagles are only losing one senior next year and have a stout group of juniors expecting to return and try to grab the championship from SIS next season.

In other results, KHS ended up in the third place, beating the well-represented Tinian High School Lady Stallions crew, while SIS' junior varsity (SIS2) finished fifth, MHS' junior varsity (MHS 2) came in at sixth, and surprisingly the third-ranked MHS varsity team (MHS 1) was forced to forfeit its games due to lack of players.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS			
EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Philadelphia	22	15	.595 —
Boston	18	17	.514 3
New York	18	18	.500 3
Toronto	11	25	.306 10
New Jersey	11	26	.297 11
Southeast Division			
Miami	28	8	.778 —
Orlando	24	14	.632 5
Atlanta	22	15	.595 6
Washington	8	28	.222 20
Charlotte	4	30	.118 23
Central Division			
Chicago	30	8	.789 —
Indiana	23	12	.657 5
Milwaukee	14	23	.378 15
Cleveland	13	22	.371 15
Detroit	12	26	.316 18
WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Southwest Division			
San Antonio	25	11	.694 —
Memphis	22	15	.595 3
Dallas	22	16	.579 4
Houston	21	16	.568 4
New Orleans	9	28	.243 16
Northwest Division			
Oklahoma City	29	8	.784 —
Denver	20	17	.541 9
Minnesota	19	19	.500 10
Portland	18	19	.486 11
Utah	17	19	.472 11
Pacific Division			
L.A. Clippers	21	13	.618 —
L.A. Lakers	22	14	.611 —
Phoenix	16	20	.444 6
Golden State	14	19	.424 6
Sacramento	12	24	.333 10
Yesterday's Games			
Atlanta 97, Oklahoma City 90			
Orlando 114, Milwaukee 98			
Washington 101, Cleveland 98			
Indiana 102, New Orleans 84			
Memphis 100, Detroit 83			
Dallas 102, Utah 96			
Minnesota 122, Portland 110			
HONDA CLASSIC SCORES			
PALM BEACH GARDENS, Florida			
(AP) — Scores Saturday from the Honda Classic, a US PGA Tour event on the 7,100-yard, par-70 Champions course at PGA National:			
Third Round			
Rory McIlroy	66-67-66	—199	
Harris English	66-69-66	—201	
Tom Gillis	68-64-69	—201	
Keegan Bradley	67-68-68	—203	
Brian Harman	73-61-69	—203	
Justin Rose	66-66-71	—203	
Charl Schwartzel	71-66-67	—204	
Dicky Pride	66-67-71	—204	
Greg Chalmers	68-69-68	—205	
Chris Stroud	70-69-67	—206	
Kevin Stadler	66-71-69	—206	
Graeme McDowell	73-64-69	—206	
Jeff Overton	71-65-70	—206	
Gary Christian	73-67-67	—207	
Davis Love III	64-72-71	—207	
Charles Howell III	68-67-72	—207	
Jimmy Walker	67-67-73	—207	
Fredrik Jacobson	70-71-67	—208	
Spencer Levin	72-69-67	—208	
Rickie Fowler	69-72-67	—208	
Mark Wilson	70-70-68	—208	
Brandt Jobe	70-69-69	—208	
Tiger Woods	71-68-69	—208	
Ernie Els	70-68-70	—208	
Ted Potter, Jr.	72-64-72	—208	
Vaughn Taylor	68-66-74	—208	
D.A. Points	71-70-68	—209	
Henrik Stenson	70-69-70	—209	
Lee Westwood	70-69-70	—209	
Erik Compton	67-71-71	—209	
Ryan Palmer	66-71-72	—209	
Rocco Mediate	69-67-73	—209	
Bob Estes	67-69-73	—209	
Rory Sabbatini	69-72-69	—210	
John Mallinger	74-67-69	—210	
Y.E. Yang	70-70-70	—210	
Robert Garrigus	71-69-70	—210	
Jason Kokrak	71-68-71	—210	
Padraig Harrington	70-68-72	—210	
Ken Duke	67-69-74	—210	
Kenny Perry	70-71-70	—211	
Cameron Tringale	72-69-70	—211	
Heath Slocum	70-71-70	—211	
J.B. Holmes	70-70-71	—211	
Stuart Appleby	69-71-71	—211	
Rod Pampling	69-71-71	—211	
Nick O'Hern	69-71-71	—211	
Tim Herron	71-69-71	—211	
Sean O'Hair	70-69-72	—211	
Carl Pettersson	67-70-74	—211	
Ben Crane	67-69-75	—211	
Ryan Moore	70-71-71	—212	
Louis Oosthuizen	67-74-71	—212	
Sang-Moon Bae	70-71-71	—212	
Jason Bohn	70-70-72	—212	
William McGirt	69-71-72	—212	
Michael Thompson	74-66-72	—212	
Scott Langley	70-69-73	—212	
Brian Davis	68-70-74	—212	
Martin Flores	66-72-74	—212	
Stewart Cink	70-67-75	—212	
John Huh	68-69-75	—212	
Chris Kirk	71-70-72	—213	
Kris Blankens	69-72-72	—213	
Jhonattan Vegas	71-69-73	—213	
Michael Bradley	70-70-73	—213	
Robert Allenby	72-68-73	—213	
Brendon de Jonge	68-72-74	—214	
Jose Maria Olazabal	73-67-74	—214	
Anthony Kim	70-69-75	—214	
Charlie Wi	71-68-75	—214	
Troy Matteson	70-69-75	—214	
Seung-Yul Noh	66-74-75	—215	
Ricky Barnes	72-69-75	—216	
Brendan Steele	68-73-75	—216	
Robert Karlsson	72-69-75	—216	
Colt Knost	71-70-79	—220	

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mean Machine tops UBA U17 tournament



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Members of Mean Machine pose for a team photo after beating Docomo Pacific Rollers in the finals of the UBA U17 Youth Island-wide Basketball Tournament last Saturday at the Garapan Basketball Court.

By **WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND**
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REPORTER



Mean Machine escaped with a 46-44 victory over the Docomo Pacific Rollers to win the Unified Basketball Association's U17 Youth Island-wide Basketball Tournament completed over the weekend at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Mean Machine is made up of John Babauta, Ralph Francisco, Joon Lee, Frank Mettao, Albert

Salas, and Mike Taitano.

Salas and Taitano scrambled for six points apiece in the first half, but Docomo's Emerson Feria and JP Iglesias matched their effort as Docomo Pacific Rollers worked out a slight edge at halftime, 22-20.

It remained tight all the way to the end, before Mean Machine's Francisco and Mettao stepped up with 10 clutch markers each at crunch time to seize the win. Docomo turned in a mixed effort throughout the match, but could not find a way to stop the

two bruisers down low.

Francisco carried the torch for Mean Machine with 15 points, while Docomo's Feria and Dixon Kwon managed 10 apiece in a bitter loss.

Before advancing to the finals, Mean Machine went through the Rollers Basketball Club's Micronesian Brokers Inc. Rollers, team Electrify, and the Pink Rangers. Docomo fought its way back into the finals after an early loss to the Pink Rangers.

Games were played in two

16-minute halves. Five teams made up the field.

The Top 2 teams will be recognized at the conclusion of the UBA U25 event slated for this weekend. Eight teams are expected to compete in the double-elimination tournament that runs on Saturday and Sunday evening from about 5pm to 9pm; weather permitting. The U15, U17 and U25 division awards presentation will take place Sunday night or im-

mediately following the U25 championship.

U25 entrance forms are still available and can be obtained at the Safety 1st System office located along Middle Road, in Gualo Rai or at the Garapan Community and Development Center. Docomo Pacific, UBA, Hoopaholics 670, and the 670 Rollers Basketball Club are teaming up in holding the youth tournament.

For registration or more infor-

mation, contact UBA's James Lee at 483-0290, GCDC's Joe Diaz at 233-8978 or email unifiedbasketballassociation@gmail.com.

Mean Machine 46 – Francisco 15, Mettao 10, Salas 8, Taitano 8, Babauta 2, Lee 2.

Docomo Rollers 44 – Feria 10, Kwon 10, Fator 8, Iglesias 7, Malonzo 4, Floresca 2, Ano 1

Scoring by halves: 20-22, 46-44.

Sunrisers edge Mobil in DLX/Miller Lite caging

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER

The Sunrisers kept their perfect record after outclassing Mobil, 80-77, during the curtain-raiser in the 2nd Domino Lux International Fraternity/Miller Lite Basketball Invitational Friendship League last Friday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

Pending the completion of its rained-out game against Blue Haus, the Sunrisers are 4-0 and hold the lead in the 10-team field, while Mobil, which had two rained-out matches, fell to a 1-1 card.

The Sunrisers rose to an early double-digit lead, 31-19, but Mobil slowly recovered and even took the lead in the fourth quarter before Josh Sablan saved the frontrunners in the final canto. Sablan knocked in 10 of his 13 markers in the fourth period, which started with the Sunrisers only ahead by a hair, 60-59.

Pete Lizama also hit important shots in the payoff canto, nailing five of his 19 markers, while Preston Basa led all scorers with his 20.

Basa anchored the Sunrisers' strong start, drilling 11 in the opening quarter for their 12-point lead. The Sunrisers had control of the match early after holding Mobil gunner Jun Estolas scoreless in the first quarter.

Then in the second period, Ernie Moises started the quarter with back-to-back triples, while Estolas' shots began to fall, allowing Mobil to move within four at the break, 39-43.

Mobil continued working its way back into the game, cutting



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Sunrisers' Pete Lizama, seen here making an uncontested shot in the paint against the Smart Cagers, scored 19 points in their 80-77 win over Mobil during last Friday's game in the DLX caging at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

the lead to one after the third period, 59-60, and it even led by as much as seven early in the fourth off Moises and Angelo Fernando's straight baskets before Sablan bailed out the Sunrisers. Sablan drained eight of the Sunrisers' first 11 points in the fourth.

Hite Beer 75, QQ Rent A Car 72

In the hotly contested second game, Hite Beer/Blue Haus survived QQ Rent A Car, 75-72.

The match that was marked by a near bench-clearing brawl was decided from the free throw line with Hite Beer canning three charities, two coming from big man Zack Diaz. Ivan

Devero, who led the team's victory with his 19 markers, converted the other charity.

Hite Beer and QQ Rent A Car played the last three minutes of the game with only five players from each squad allowed at the court and league officials threw out the rest of the players after moving out of the bench and almost exchanging in a fight after several rough plays and second motion from both camps.

The heated and closely fought match started with QQ on top by only one, 14-13, and then the lead shifted to Hite Beer at the break, 34-33. Hite Beer kept the lead after the third, 51-49, off Dan Mateo's late triple and the nip-and-tuck tussle continued in the fourth with the eventual winning team having the slight edge as it had frequent trips to the foul line. Hite converted nine charities in the fourth against QQ's three.

First Game

Sunrisers 80 – Basa 20, Lizama 19, Joyner 15, Jos. Sablan 13, Manibusan 6, J. Quitugua 6.

Mobil Smiles 77 – Estolas 16, Moises 13, Ruluked 13, Bicara 12, Demapan 11, Fernando 10, Reyes 2.

Scoring by quarters: 31-19, 43-39, 60-59, 90-77.

Second Game

Hite Beer/Blue Haus 75 – Devero 19, Tenorio 17, Lauron 13, Diaz 7, Lisua 5, Cabrera 4, R. Babauta 3, Palacios 3, Z. Babauta 2.

QQ Rent A Car 72 – Pagarao 25, Mangali 12, Mateo 10, Camacho 9, Abuel 6, Paraiso 5, Sison 2, Cruz 2.

Scoring by quarters: 13-14, 34-33, 51-49, 75-72.

XTERRA trails cleared, ready for rides

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**
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REPORTER



Triathletes can now negotiate the run and bike trails of the 2012 XTERRA Saipan Championship three weeks before the real race kicks off.

Wolf Mojica, president of Taga, Inc., which organizes XTERRA Saipan and Tagaman, along with John Douglas, Dawn Hammermeister and a four-man crew from J.M. & Associates cleared majority of the bike and run trails last Thursday. The crew first cleaned up the backside of the Mt. Tapochao where the breathtaking "Sound of Music" trail is located. From there the crew moved to Banana Rama and Ho Chi Minh trails. Earlier last month, Mojica and crew also made clearing works along McDick trails and the run portion of the trail course, starting at Anak's.

"The XTERRA bike course, except for the Navy Hill bus stop is open for riding. We just want to caution riders to be careful when crossing Bananarama Bridge. Ride safely," Mojica said after almost a day-long clearing.

Douglas added that the more bikers hold pre-rides, the better the course will be like in time for XTERRA Saipan, which will be held on March 24.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Taga, Inc president Wolf Mojica leads a clearing crew in cutting tall grasses along Ho Chi Minh trail last Thursday afternoon.

With only three weeks before XTERRA's Crown Jewel starts, the annual event has already drawn more than 30 triathletes led by former champions Renata Bucher and Olivier Marceau. Expected to join the two Swiss pros are Jacqui Slack of the United Kingdom, Carina Wasle of Austria, Denison Freitas of Brazil, and Cedric Lassonde, Ben Allen, and Graham Wadsworth of U.K.

Defending champions Shonny Vanlandingham of the U.S. and Sam Gardner of U.K. are missing this year's XTERRA Saipan, making the battle for the men's and women's crowns an open race.

XTERRA Saipan will be the visiting pros third stop of the

month as they are heading first to Guam for the March 10 competition and to XTERRA Philippines on March 17. Bucher and some other pros will then stay on Saipan for Tagaman, which is scheduled for March 31.

Registrations for both XTERRA and Tagaman are still open.

Cash prizes will be given away to the Top 7 finishers in XTERRA Saipan and the male and female participants with the best combined timed for XTERRA and Tagaman. World XTERRA slots for various age groups are also at stake in the Crown Jewel race.

Registration deadline for XTERRA is on March 21. For more information, log on to saipansports.com.

**SPORTS
TSL
COMPLEX**

Activity Schedule for March 5, 2012

8:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Morning practices

6:30 PM to 9:30 PM: Evening practices

NMBA
NORTHERN MARIANAS BADMINTON ASSOCIATION

There are no
scheduled games.

Gillette
MULTIPURPOSE GYMNASIUM

There are no
scheduled games.

**SAIPAN
SOCCER SCHOOL**



Magic get fourth straight win against Bucks
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Saipan Tribune Sports



Saints put franchise tag on quarterback Brees
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Mami reclaims women's title

» **Former Olympian wins ultra marathon**

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Mamiko Oshima-Berger lets go a big smile just before cutting the tape at the finish line of last Saturday's 2012 Saipan Marathon.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Saipan bet Mamiko Oshima-Berger was in tears after cutting the tape in the 2011 Saipan Marathon, but last Saturday, a big smile was plastered all over her face even if she was still a few steps away from the finish line.

Oshima-Berger had all the reasons to be happy, as she went on to reclaim the women's division crown in the marathon and also set the new course record in the 42.195-kilometer race. She timed in at three hours, nine minutes, and 49 seconds in last weekend's race to crush the 2010 record of (3:10:03) Mayu Mochizuki of Japan and more importantly regain the women's crown the veteran runner lost for two straight years. Oshima-Berger notched

championship in 2008 and 2009, before bowing to Mochizuki in 2010 and to Noriko Hirao last year.

"It was a great feeling to win again. I had a very good race, as I felt stronger coming into the last five kilometers of the race," said Oshima-Berger, who led from start to finish with good friend and running partner Mieko Carey announcing her arrival and



See MAMI on Page 26



Olympian Eric Wainaina Wahinya of Kenya crosses the finish line of the 50K race of last Saturday's 2012 Saipan Marathon.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

SIS clinches MISO girls volleyball crown



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Saipan International School Lady Geckos pose for a team photo after beating Grace Christian Academy in the MISO girls volleyball finals over the weekend at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



Saipan International School's varsity team were crowned back-to-back champions in the 2012 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Girls Volleyball League after outlasting Grace Christian Academy in a three-set finale yesterday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

The champion squad is composed of seniors Zoe Jewell, Jian Joyner, Amber Roberts, and Lani Russel, juniors Celine Camacho, Saeri Oh, and Amy Xie, sophomore Kristle Ogbac, and freshmen Jeane Bracken and Phalai Frink. Mili Sakai coaches the team.

The Lady Geckos (SIS 1)
See SIS on Page 26

Close wins for Hustlers, Red Sox

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The Big League's Paradise Island Animal Hospital Hustlers and Junior League's Bank of Saipan Red Sox came out on top of close matches in the 2012 Saipan Little League Baseball.

The Hustlers were relieved to stretch their streak to three with an 8-7 win over the hungry Kagman Lions (0-3) last Thursday, while the Red Sox (1-1) survived the IT&E Fielders (0-2), 4-2, last Saturday morning at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

In other results, Senior League's IT&E Fielders (2-0) buried the D-9ers (0-1), 11-2, while in the Majors games played at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan Ballfield, the Dandan Comets

(3-0) blazed past the IT&E Ol'Aces (1-2), 18-1, and IT&E (2-0) bested the Natibu Tanapag Braves (0-2), 9-4.

MAJORS IT&E 9, Braves 4

It was tied at 2-all after two innings and remained even until visiting IT&E spurted ahead, 6-2, in the top of the fifth frame off three hits and a couple wild pitches. Alan Hinson cranked an RBI single.

The Braves could only muster a run in the final two innings.

Braves' starter Brandon Pua did a good job holding IT&E in his four and a third innings at the rubber, but IT&E mixed it up with three different pitchers who all turned in a solid showing. Pua gave up just two hits and two walks and struck out 11.

See CLOSE on Page 26



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

IT&E Fielders' Ian Lizama fires home a pitch against the D-9ers during their game in the Senior League last Thursday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.